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AMONG THE HERETICS  
IN EUROPE







FIRST NATIONAL CONGRESS OF RUSSIAN BAPTISTS

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# Among the Heretics in Europe

By  
J. A. Packer

*With an Introduction by*  
THE REV. JOHN CLIFFORD, M.A., D.D.

Eight Full-page Illustrations

Cassell and Company, Ltd  
London, New York, Toronto and Melbourne  
1912

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## Prefatory Note

BY REV. JOHN CLIFFORD, M.A., D.D.

My friend Mr. Packer offers me the opportunity of saying a few words to my Baptist friends concerning this account of the visit he made to the Baptists of the Continent of Europe, and especially of Russia, in the year 1911.

I gladly avail myself of it. For the story is one of manifold interest. It is full of thrill in itself, and it is told in an easy and pleasant style, alluring the reader from page to page, and holding his attention from beginning to end.

There is the added charm of much that is fresh. St. Petersburg and Moscow, Buda Pesth and Madrid, are not familiar spots, and do not offer familiar scenes for the pen of the journalist. Life in these cities is to a large degree strange to the Anglo-Saxon, and its details appeal to our curiosity.

But the book is mainly concerned with the two great struggles of the human race: (1) the struggle for the perfect and ultimate Religion, and (2) the struggle for individual freedom—two struggles which are so interlocked that wherever you find one you

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are sure to discover that you are in the presence of the other.

Russia within the last fifty years has experienced a wonderful spiritual awakening. Tolstoy is one sign ; Turgenieff, Maxim Gorky, Dmitri Marejkowski are others ; but it is amongst the people—and notably the peasantry—that there has been the most remarkable “ stirring of the dry bones.” Thousands have been led to the acceptance of the primitive Christianity of the New Testament, have seen in Jesus their Saviour and Leader and Lord, and have formed societies, under His authority and inspiration, of a self-governing type. They are advancing by leaps and bounds. Mr. Packer has visited some of these communities, and he gives a succession of glimpses of the rise and advance of this Revival of Religion. It is a record of progress, and of progress in the deepest things of life ; and it is a prophecy of the future.

All readers will find a full reward in this volume ; but Baptists in Britain, in the United States of America, and all over the world will be specially delighted to accompany Mr. Packer on his pilgrimage “ Among the Heretics in Europe.”

JOHN CLIFFORD.

## Foreword

To a journalist who has spent twenty-five years of his working life in Australia, a country which has practically no history, and where all things are new, there can be no greater luxury than a holiday in Europe. For years it had been my desire to study at close quarters the struggle that is going on all over Europe in the cause of religious liberty, and to make the acquaintance of some of the men and women who are re-writing history and changing the face of a Continent. That was my special mission. I have written only of what I saw, of what I heard at first hand, and of what was told me of their own knowledge by men and women in the vanguard of this movement.

It was a case of "through Europe without a language." Many people have asked how I managed with only a knowledge of English. It was just a matter of dribbling through. I was advised to learn Esperanto, and fagged at it on the voyage; but never met a soul who could speak it. That was not the fault of Esperanto. The journey did not lie that way. Imperial letters of commendation, and

introductions from public men and secret brotherhoods, were carried. None of these served. Long before the 40,000 mile journey was over the discovery had been made that for the purpose of that journey the best passport was comradeship in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for it enabled one to triumph over all languages, and most of the difficulties pertaining to travel in strange countries. Moreover, it gave one the *entrée* to the hearts and confidences of men who have been taught by long years of oppression that silence is golden, and that discretion is the better part of valour.

If there is anything of interest or inspiration in this plain recital of a newspaper man's experiences, it is modestly dedicated to my friend W. B., in Sydney, to the friends who showed a barbarian much kindness, and to the brave men and women in Europe who are contending for the Evangelical faith, many of whom are "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus."

SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES,  
May, 1912.

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# AMONG THE HERETICS IN EUROPE

## CHAPTER I

### THE PAINS AND PLEASURES OF TRAVELLING IN RUSSIA

BEFORE I left London for Russia a well-known journalist gave me this warning, "You may lose your wife and family, you may lose your clothes and your money, you may lose your reputation if you have any, but you must be careful not to lose your passport or you may never get out." It was only as I began to learn of the devious methods of the Russian police that I understood the full meaning of that warning. There is no appeal against any injustice or wrongful imprisonment unless you can get past the police, and that is impossible, except under the most exceptional circumstances. In no other country in Europe does the passport play such an important part as in Russia. It is part of the official machinery. Without it Russia would have to revise her whole system of government. No person can enter Russia without a passport, much less leave the country. The scene at a Russian

frontier railway station has no parallel in Europe. The experience at Wirballen after the free and uninterrupted methods of France and Germany was something to remember.

With the warning as to keeping a tight hold of my passport fresh in the memory, it was disconcerting, to say the least, to be bailed up after the manner of the old-time Australian bushranger and unceremoniously ordered to hand over one's passport to a crowd of officials whose language has no meaning for you. It is all right if you have been that way before ; but most of the passengers from our train had not, and their language was much more expressive than that of the Russian officers as they waited and waited in the Customs room before they were allowed to get another sight of those precious passports. In the meantime nothing could be done. Supper had to be kept in abeyance, though it was close on midnight, for nobody was allowed to leave the room. Customs officers refused to pass the luggage. The only people who seemed to enjoy the situation were the luggage porters. German porters have to be paid to carry the luggage into the Customs room ; but only Russian porters are allowed to handle it thereafter. Thus two tips are demanded, and in neither case is it earned.

After keeping about two hundred people standing for nearly two hours—there was not a seat in the room—the officials paraded inside the circular counter

and called out the names of the owners of the passports. There were many nationalities represented among the travellers, but unless you were a Russian you would never recognise your own name. Mine was called a dozen or more times, but it had no familiar sound for me. It had been Russianised out of recognition. It so happened that my passport peculiarly differed in shape from any of the others, and to this fact I owed the recovery of it in time to catch the train for St. Petersburg.

With the passport returned, there was no difficulty with the Customs officers; but there were other troubles that quickly made me realise I was in Russia. I had booked through to St. Petersburg from London, and paid for a sleeping berth for each of the three nights of the journey. On the Russian side my sleeping berth coupon was ignored, and nine roubles (eighteen shillings) were demanded before I was permitted to board the train. There was nothing in the compartment to show that it was a sleeper, and having paid twice for the privilege of sleeping on board I inquired the reason. A friendly fellow-traveller, a German Jew, enlightened me. On the Russian trains a sleeping berth ticket only entitles the holder to a place on which to lie down. "If you want pillow and sheets," it was explained to me, "you must pay extra." The extra was a rouble. The conductor who brought the bed-clothes asked for my ticket. As the tickets across

Europe are issued in sections I carried quite a number. The conductor appropriated the lot and departed, and though I shouted after him he could not understand. Here was a nice fix for an innocent abroad to be in, in a strange country without the slightest knowledge of the language, I reflected ; but having hunted up the Jew, he relieved my anxiety. It is the rule of the road on long journeys in Russia for the conductors to take your tickets—pocket-book and all, if you have any. They are as safe with the conductor as if they were in a bank, and at the end of the journey he returns all that have not been used. The idea is to save the traveller the inconvenience of being wakened out of his sleep by officials whose duty it is to examine tickets *en route*.

Railway travelling in Russia is no hardship. The carriages are roomy and comfortable. The fuel used in the engines is wood and oil. The speed attained by the fastest trains never exceeds about thirty miles an hour. The slow trains simply crawl.

The scenery along the railway line between Irun and St. Petersburg and on to Moscow has no special attraction for the traveller. The country is for the most part flat and uninteresting. One's attention is chiefly occupied in watching the peasants at their work in the fields, and noting their primitive methods of agriculture. In this work women play the most important part. Generally, the men are conspicuous

by their absence. If by chance you catch sight of any men in the fields with the women, they are invariably looking on. I asked a lady in St. Petersburg what a peasant was (using the Russian equivalent), and she replied, "A peasant is a man who tills the soil." Observations in the course of about two thousand miles of travelling in Russia between the German frontier and Moscow led me before leaving to ask her to be allowed to correct her definition. "So far as I have seen," I remarked, "a peasant is a man whose wife tills the soil." She laughingly admitted that perhaps I was right.

In Germany one sees much the same thing. At all the railway gates and crossings along the line women are in charge, and as the train rushes by they may be seen standing at attention with the flag rolled up and held much as a soldier would stand at attention with his rifle. The same custom prevails in Russia. There is, however, this difference. Whether at the railway gates or in the fields in Germany, the women are comfortably clothed and shod. In Russia none of the peasant women wear either boots or stockings. Alike in Germany and Russia, the cause for this sad spectacle of women having to do the work in the fields is militarism, which hangs like a curse over both countries. Discussing the question with educated ladies in Russia, I was surprised to learn that such a custom could be defended. The view taken by

the women themselves is that it has been a great boon to Russia in giving the women a sense of independence, which they would not otherwise have had. Naturally, with the men so often away from home on military service, and liable to be called out at a moment's notice, somebody has to do the work of the farm, or the crops would fail and the people would starve. But what about the degradation of a system of conscription which makes such unfair demands upon the men of the nation that they are not able to follow their natural occupation, and imposes such a scandalous burden upon the women?

Still, woman has her compensations even in Russia. Eloquence, for instance, is a natural gift in Russia. The average Russian, and particularly the Russian woman, is never lost for a word. Both are as fluent as Niagara, and whether at the table, in the hotels, or in dining cars on the trains, I noticed that the lady invariably made it difficult for poor man to get a word in the conversation. I am not sufficiently acquainted with the language to venture the assertion that in Russia the lady always gets the last word. It is easy to see that she generally got in first, and with a good wicket and seized the advantage to pile up a big score.

What hotel proprietors in Europe do not know about taking travellers down is not worth learning. The practice in St. Petersburg with regard to

conveying customers to and from the railway station is universal throughout Europe. Having decided to stay at a certain hotel you naturally take the omnibus bearing the name of that hotel, and which, in your simplicity, you conclude is run for the convenience of passengers, and also to secure business for the hotel. Experience soon warns you that hotel omnibuses are an imposition. The price added to your bill is about three times that of the ordinary vehicle, apart from tips to the driver and the man who rides on the step.

Only when you reach your hotel do you properly begin to realise the part which the passport plays in the official life of Russia. Before you cross the threshold the landlord or the head porter, gorgeously decorated with gold braid, requests your passport. It is his duty to send it at once to the police department and thus notify the police of your arrival, and the fact of your staying at this particular hotel. For that privilege the traveller has to pay a rouble (two shillings). The passport is kept until you leave the hotel, and though you may only remain a day, you have to pay another rouble to the police for the double privilege of being allowed to depart and having your passport returned. Every time you change your hotel, though it be only from one street to another, as I did in St. Petersburg, the same process has to be gone through: police permission has to be obtained, the visa stamp has to be put on the

passport, and the rouble has to be paid. In going from town to town or city to city, the same regulation is enforced. I paid to be allowed to go to Moscow. I paid to be allowed to stay in Moscow. I paid to be allowed to change hotels in Moscow. I paid to be allowed to leave Moscow. I paid to be allowed to return to the same hotel in St. Petersburg; and so it went on all the time. For the final privilege of being permitted to leave Russia I had to pay double.

To an Englishman this sort of thing becomes irritating; but he soon learns that for the people who live in Russia a worse state of affairs exists. Every man, woman, and child over the age of five years has to be registered, and the police apprised of every change of address. By such means the police can put their hands on every person in that vast Empire at a few minutes' notice. To such tyrannical lengths does this law of registration go that a boarder cannot change lodgings, or even rooms in a flat, without police sanction. Moreover, every janitor is responsible to the police for keeping them informed of the movements of every person occupying the premises under his charge.

Only three classes of Jews are tolerated in St. Petersburg—viz. well-to-do merchants, who are able to pay not less than 5,000 roubles a year rent; university professors; and women of the street. Theoretically, anyway, that is the law; and though



some manage to evade the authorities, one sees very few Jews in St. Petersburg.

As all the world knows, Jews have a very bad time in Russia. Sometimes it is their own fault ; generally it is not. For the most part, they are hunted like a wallaby on the mountain.

The night I was leaving Moscow—all the long-distance trains in Russia start from the termini at night—I was sitting in the railway carriage waiting for the train to start. About five minutes before the bell tinkled an athletic young fellow came along the corridor and looked into our compartment. Then, turning to a comrade who was standing on the platform gazing in at the open window, he observed in English, with a sigh of relief, " Only four of us." " I am sorry to say there are six," I explained. " Well, thank God there is one who can speak a decent language," he rejoined. He was a subaltern in the British army, who had been living for three years outside Moscow to learn Russian to qualify for the diplomatic service. He was on his way to London for his exam.

As the train moved out from the station there emerged from nobody quite knew where a seventh passenger. He was a Jew. He had been in hiding for three days and four nights, waiting to board that train. It was more than his life was worth, he told us, to have been recognised in Moscow. He knew enough English to make himself understood, and

hearing two of us in conversation, concluded he was among friends. Over a glass of chi (tea) in the corridor he took us into his confidence and told his story in Russian to the subaltern, who interpreted for my benefit. The man was naturally inquisitive—most Jews are—and he was not long in finding out who I was. When told that I hailed from Australia, his manner changed in a surprising way. Casting off all reserve, he spoke with the fluency of a water-spout. As he talked he gradually sidled up to me, and his attentions were affectionately demonstrative. He felt me all over, held my hand, and stroked my coat-sleeves. "What does the fellow mean?" I was asking myself. "Is it because I am an Australian? What does he take me for? Is he feeling for the fur of the marsupial or the feathers of the emu?" The truth soon came out. The man could not keep it back. His ruling passion had to assert itself. Under its influence all other troubles were forgotten.

"Ask him what they do with their hides in Australia," he appealed to the subaltern. He was a dealer in "skins, hides, hair, bones, and tallow," as the market reports put it. The turn of affairs was so ludicrously incongruous that I could not resist a joke.

"Tell him," I answered, "that hides are not in my line; but that, generally speaking, in Australia, the thick ones go to the politicians and the thin ones to the shoemakers."

The poor fellow was disappointed. The joke was wasted on him. He was seriously turning the answer over in his brain for hours ; I could tell by his eyes every time I looked at him.

Next morning, over his chi and cigarette, he made one final effort to solve the riddle. " The Jew wants to know how many politicians you have in Australia, and why do they require so many hides ? " asked the subaltern in gravest tones.

## CHAPTER II

### SNAPSHOTS IN ST. PETERSBURG

FROM an architectural point of view, St. Petersburg is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Every prospect pleases, and only the smells are vile. In a sanitary sense, its situation is as bad as it could be. Dig a few feet below the surface in any part of the city, I was told, and you strike water. There is no sewerage system. Everything runs straight into the ground. When the soil is overcharged it oozes into the canals, and as the canals are but feebly washed by the tides, cholera and typhoid are rampant and epidemic. But for the merciful intervention of winter, which freezes up the canals and destroys every disease germ, St. Petersburg would be swept off the face of the earth by pestilence in a year or two.

No attempt is made by the authorities to enforce sanitary regulations. The streets are paved with cobblestones, and as these sink into the ground from the pressure of traffic, holes are made into which water and refuse collect with nauseating results.

The street scavengers in St. Petersburg are a set of lazy rascals, who deserve to be consigned to the

chain-gangs in Siberia. I spent much spare time in watching their operations. They generally work in companies of three. One wheels a barrow, another carries a besom of indifferent quality, and the third a shovel. The man with the besom takes infinite pains in sweeping the dirt off the cobblestones into a heap—though never a big heap—and when everything is ready for the shovel and the barrow he takes a look round, watches his opportunity, and suddenly swishes the besom with both hands and scatters the refuse broadcast again. Very little of it goes into the barrow. That is their idea of street scavenging. Is it any wonder that the city is unhealthy, or that the atmosphere reeks with impurity? One seemed to sniff a different odour at every corner. They were certainly too numerous to count. I had thought of trying to photograph some of them as samples, but feared they would be unprintable, or, if printable, certainly unfit for publication.

Yet, with all its sanitary drawbacks, St. Petersburg is fascinating. One has to go south to Moscow to find a typical Russian city. St. Petersburg is a cosmopolitan city. There one meets people from all quarters of the globe, and from every country in Europe. The Germans are the most plentiful, and Englishmen, at least, are loud in their complaints that the Teutons have been allowed, through the supine commercial attitude of conservative English-

men, to practically oust them from the Russian market.

There is colour everywhere in the streets. Though clothing and living are excessively dear, the people are, for the most part, well and even extravagantly dressed. There is no more picturesque sight outside of Asia, probably, than Nevski Prospect, the leading thoroughfare, on any afternoon in the week. As the population of America is said to be mostly colonels and doctors of divinity, so in St. Petersburg it appears to be mostly military. But appearances are deceptive, and the multiplication of uniforms is the cause. About every third man one passes in the streets is wearing a uniform. Even in the height of summer the long, roomy military cloak is the prevailing masculine garment. But the wearers are not all soldiers by any means. Professional men, university men, students, schoolboys, all affect this style of dress, and it is only the difference in the colour of the cloth that distinguishes them. It seemed incongruous to find people thus attired in the heat of summer. I expressed surprise that Russians should never seem to appear outdoors without their uniform. The explanation was this : Clothes are such a luxury in Russia, and particularly uniforms, that the average man cannot afford plain clothes as well. The common reason why he is always seen abroad in uniform therefore amounts to this : it is the only suit he possesses !

The reason seems absurd, but I was assured that it was strictly true in the majority of cases.

There is no denying that St. Petersburg society is gay and fast. The dominant note is pleasure. The well-to-do Russian is a heavy feeder. Dinner at seven o'clock is the most important event of the day, and, apparently, the chief end of every Russian who can afford it. He fasts in the early hours of the day ; but at night he gorges for a good two hours, and goes to the theatre at nine. The liveliest time in St. Petersburg is from 9 p.m. till about 2 a.m.

The droshki driver is an institution standing alone and unparalleled. Where else in Europe does one see such uniformly magnificent horses as in St. Petersburg ? The droshki horses are, as a rule, superb animals, a fact chiefly due to the circumstance that the drivers hail from the country and bring their own steeds with them. The drivers themselves are all big men. The London police are spoken of as the finest body of men in the world, but one is tempted to amend that verdict on first making the acquaintance of the St. Petersburg droshki driver. Some of them assume such colossal proportions that when riding behind them one has to move in his seat and crane his neck to see down the street.

But many things in life are not always what they seem, and droshki drivers are in that catalogue. The law of custom in Russia has determined that

a man of means or influence shall be known by his droshki driver, so that the higher he rises in the social or official scale the bigger the circumference of his coachman. The driver of (say) a baron, or a cabinet minister, or a prince, needs to bulk like a Tichborne claimant. But it is not genuine, or, at least, only partially so. If the truth must be told, there are not enough big men in Russia to go round as droshki drivers, and the average men have to resort to artificial means for inflating their exteriors. It is all a matter of padding, when you know the secret, though the long blue overcoat, tied round the middle with a belt, gives no such suggestion. Such a device may add comfort as well as rotundity to the figure in the winter time ; but in the summer the ordeal is a severe one. Indeed, the more bulky of them, I was assured, are driven to interlarding their cushions with icepacks during the very hot weather as the only way of keeping down the temperature.

From the moral standpoint St. Petersburg and Moscow are the saddest cities in Europe that I visited. Drunkenness and immorality are flaunted openly as I never saw it elsewhere. There seems to be no moral standard. If my diagnosis be correct, sin there is mainly the expression of people in whose lives no hope has ever shone, to whom no joy or brightness has ever come. The poor of the cities, equally with the peasants, drink vodka to drown



their wretchedness rather than to excite their passions. Take the case of the young droshki driver whom I employed in Moscow. Every time we stopped to enter a shop or inspect some object of interest, he ran away to get a drink of this spirit. I spoke to him about it through a companion, and his excuse was, "It warms me, sir," and the expression of his face and the tone of his voice told of a tragedy in the poor fellow's life. He was seeking an artificial warmth for his body, when all the time it was his heart that needed warming. Largely, I believe, the debauchery and immorality of St. Petersburg express the reckless desire of an oppressed race to drown their sorrows, or at least to temporarily forget them.

The drink problem in Russia is a pressing one, but as yet there is no Father Mathew to call either the people or the Government to repentance. With the Government it is the old and universal question of revenue. Some years ago, even the authorities stood appalled at the frightful condition of things, and in a fit of moral reformation passed a law prohibiting the sale of vodka, the national drink, except in bottles. The result was beyond all expectations, though easy to explain. Bottled vodka was beyond the means of the average peasant, and he had to abstain against his will. Drunkenness, accordingly, was reduced to a minimum in a very short time.

Then a smart, influential, and wealthy firm of Jews saw their chance. War had depleted the national exchequer, and the Government were hard put to it to "raise the wind." The Jews had been cute enough to discover a flaw in the Act. There was no stipulation as to the size of the bottle in which vodka must be sold. So they made a tempting offer to the Government for the sole right to sell the spirit. The offer was approved and the contract signed, and immediately Russia was flooded with vodka in small bottles, selling at about sixpence in English money. The effect was electric. Once again the beverage was available for the poorest, and drunkenness increased at such a rate that all previous records were left behind. And the monopolists are coining money.

The most impressive feature in Russia, whether in town or country, is the passionate religious devotion of the people. The fact is noticeable in every phase of life. The ikons, or religious pictures, are conspicuous in every home and in every shop and place of business. They are invariably pictures of Christ, and play much the same part in the life of the Orthodox Greek that the Crucifix does in the life of the Roman Catholic. On entering his home, his place of business, or shop to make some purchase, the Russian's eye first searches for the ikon, and immediately, if not always outwardly, he pays his devotion to it. Scattered over the city are

innumerable prayer kiosks, where beautiful ikons are displayed behind rows of tapers. These are crowded day and night with men, women, and children who have turned aside from the ordinary affairs of life to practise their devotions. The first act, in most cases, is to place a coin on the table or altar to pay for one of the candles, which is lighted by the worshipper before he kneels on the stone floor to offer his prayer. It is a squeezing process to get into one of these kiosks, so crowded are they, and much more difficult to find a space whereon to kneel. The numerous churches and cathedrals present the same sight. And it goes on all day and every day. It is all an indication of the natural reverence and devotion of the Russian mind, and as one watched these poor people—for they were mostly poor—in their evident, if misguided, sincerity, and thought of their conditions of living and the burdens of oppression under which they are struggling, it was impossible not to ask how far this religious spirit stands between them and revolution.

There is no national system of education in Russia, no public school system, no system of compulsory education. For primary education the children are chiefly dependent on the priests, who are generally broken reeds. There are comparatively few primary schools.

“ We have had the church here for the past ten years, and our children have not learned anything

except the catechism." Such is a sample of the letters which reach the Minister for Education from peasants all over the Empire. If the Minister hearkens—and he sometimes does—and intervenes, and authorises a school, the parents have to pay towards the cost. This knowledge, having regard to their general poverty, makes most of the peasants hesitate before asking for a school. The teachers in the Church schools are themselves very ignorant.

Education has not been encouraged in Russia. It is far easier to open an inn for the sale of liquor. To start an inn, all you have to do is to apply to the interested local authorities, but authority for a school has to come from the indifferent Minister. That, at least, is how the situation was explained to me by a university teacher in St. Petersburg. Russia is waiting the coming of the schoolmaster and an enlightened system of education. When these arrive they will herald a new age.

## CHAPTER III

### “ SINCE THE DAYS OF THE APOSTLES ”

IN every country in Europe the struggle for religious liberty has made wonderful progress during the past decade, and particularly in Russia, Hungary, Spain, France, and Italy. In Russia and south-eastern Europe the Baptist is the dominant witness for Evangelical Christianity, just as in Madagascar the honour belongs to the Congregationalists, in Fiji to the Methodists, in the New Hebrides to the Presbyterians, and in Melanesia to the Anglicans.

The situation in Russia and south-eastern Europe is unique and startling. There has been nothing like it since apostolic days. The Kingdom of God is being preached, and men are pressing into the Kingdom, not by hundreds, but by thousands.

But the most inspiring aspect of this work is not the numbers who have declared themselves for Jesus Christ, but the character of the work. For years there has been a certain amount of organised denominational effort in Russia, among foreign residents, which may be particularised, without disrespect or lack of charity, as human effort. This has had its reward ; but the results have been

comparatively small and circumscribed ; yet within five years of the edict granting religious liberty to the Russian people something like 100,000 have declared themselves Christians of the Baptist faith and order, and it is believed that there are quite as many more who have not declared themselves for fear of the police.

There is no such thing in Russia as law in the sense that Englishmen know it. It is government by edict and by the police. The edicts are so vague that few care to interpret them, because whatever the interpretation the police would say it was wrong and deal out summary justice. There is no law which prevents a man being kept in gaol for more than twenty-four hours without being brought before a magistrate. There is no law to prohibit a man being sentenced to imprisonment without a fair trial. For the most part the police do as they like, especially in the country districts remote from the seat of government. Thousands have been imprisoned and cruelly ill-treated by the arbitrary action of the police, and have had no redress. There is no chance of appeal in such cases. The Government does not want to be bothered with appeals, and the police take care that none go forward.

Nobody can explain the genesis of this religious movement. Here and there you may get into touch with individuals who can tell you stories of



### HOW THE REVIVAL SPREADS

A Russian noblewoman preaching to peasants on her estate in the Province of Tula.





how the Gospel came to their village, or how this and that church came to be founded ; but behind it all was this outstanding fact, that the work was the work of the Holy Spirit. In the quiet of their own lives the Holy Spirit came to a man here and a woman there and touched their hearts. Having found the Christ, God helping them, they could do no other than witness for Him, and their testimony was blessed in a wonderful way ; and as the numbers of those who gladly received the Word and were baptised increased, small companies of believers formed themselves into churches, and generally and naturally the man or the woman who had first testified among them became the leader, elder, or pastor. Thus the Word came to be multiplied all over Russia and south-eastern Europe. From Siberia in the north to Odessa in the south, and right through the Balkan Provinces, dozens of churches stand to-day as witnesses of one man or one woman's obedience to the heavenly vision. As the result of the faithful preaching of the exiles the work is spreading all over Siberia. Several magnificent churches have been built, and in all the world there is no missionary field which shows greater promise or fulfilment than Siberia. The Government official figures give the number of baptisms in Russia for five years as close upon 40,000 ; but these only relate to baptisms which have been reported to the officials. In eight years more than

7,000 have been baptised in the kingdom of Transylvania.

Seven years ago in Hungary, in a village called Acra, an old peasant woman went to Budapest to sell her chickens and eggs in the market. After disposing of her stock she started to see the city. She passed a Baptist chapel, and saw outside these words: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." She had never heard that from any priest. It was something quite new, and her curiosity was aroused. She entered the chapel and asked the colporteur about it, and finally bought a Testament. This she took home and read. Then, like the woman in the Gospels who had found the silver she had lost, she called in her neighbours and read to them the word of life. In good time they sent to Budapest for a brother to come and form them into a church. And who was elected to be the first pastor? Why, the old market-woman herself. She is now aged and bent and racked with rheumatism, so that she is unable to stand, but the friends built her a high chair from which she preaches the Gospel every Sunday. That church, when I was in Europe, had eighty-two members.

In a small village in Servia there lives another aged woman. She is very poor and blind, and she was put in prison because she loved her Lord. But

she still loves Him and serves Him, and under her humble roof, in an ill-furnished room scarcely large enough to hold them, seven of God's children meet regularly around the Lord's Table, in spite of the fact that in Servia every time the brethren meet for worship the policeman comes along and takes them to prison. But the people continue to meet, either in the forest, in the cowshed, or in the old blind woman's kitchen, to praise God, to hold communion with Him, and to enjoy Christian fellowship.

In the year 1901 a humble railway porter was transferred to Kolozvar, the capital city of Transylvania. On arrival with his wife and two little children he learned that there was not a Protestant church in the place. What could he do? He could not go to the Roman Catholic Church, for he had renounced it. He was not going to try the Orthodox Church. What was he to do? Well, he did this: when the first Sunday morning came round he and his wife and children sang and prayed and read the Bible. The neighbours heard the singing, and wondered what it meant. During the week some women ventured to ask his wife. She invited them to come on the following Sunday and see and hear for themselves. And this porter for the first time in his life found he had to preach. He did something better. He told these people how he came to know the Lord. At the end of that year some

of them wanted to be baptised, and a brother was brought from a distance to baptise them in the river. In 1903 a little chapel to seat 120 people was opened. In 1908 the Rev. C. T. Byford preached the opening sermon in the third new church, and a fortnight before joining me in St. Petersburg he had the pleasure of preaching in that building to a congregation which crowded it to the doors. In 1901 a railway porter was the first Baptist in that district ; to-day there are the mother church, twenty-five mission stations, and 5,800 baptised believers. That has come from one man being faithful to Jesus Christ.

Most people have heard of Kazanlek, from whence comes the attar of roses. It is in the famous Shipka Pass. Some twenty years ago a colporteur came over the mountains selling Bibles. A young man bought a copy and his friend bought another, and in time they induced quite a number of young men to join them in reading and studying the Bible. As they read they came to believe that a Christian should give one-tenth of his income to the Lord, that he should not swear or take an oath before a magistrate, that he should be baptised on a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, that he should endeavour as far as practicable to preach the Gospel to everybody coming under his influence. Twenty-eight young men took a pledge to make these principles the guiding motives of their lives. They

knew nothing about forming a church, and though they made inquiries they got no information.

At this point the war of independence broke out. The Turks came and their village was burned to the ground. Those young men fought for hearth and home and liberty. Some of them never survived. After Shipka came Plevna, and the survivors were in the first fighting; but after Plevna there were only six of them left, and these went into Croatia and Slavonia. Then came the Treaty of Berlin. Only three returned to their native village, but through all those days of peril, fire and sword, they had kept their faith, and they commenced again to study the Word of God together, as they had been wont to do before the war. Others were attracted, and finally the question arose, "Who is to baptise us?" Well, they went to a priest and asked him. "Yes," he said, "I'll baptise you." "But have you yourself been baptised on a profession of your faith in Jesus Christ?" they asked. "No." "Then how can you baptise us?"

At length, after earnest inquiries, they heard of some people in a far-distant place who dipped people in the river, so they wrote a letter to them; and this is how they addressed it: "To the Church of strange practices, Tolchi, Roumania." But they never got any reply. Then, one night, at a prayer meeting, one of the young men said, "The Spirit of the Lord leads me to suggest that we put an

advertisement in the paper." So they wrote out this advertisement :

" We believe that a true Christian should give one-tenth of his income to the Lord, that he should not swear or take an oath before a magistrate, that he should be baptised on a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, and that he should seek to preach the Gospel to every creature. If there is anybody in the whole world who believes as we believe, let him come to our help, or communicate with George Dunnikoff, the Market Place, Kazanlek."

Two Russian brethren, exiled for their faith, saw that advertisement, travelled over the Balkan Mountains, through the Shipka Pass, and down through to Kazanlek, met these brethren, stayed several days, and one glorious morning baptised them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

On a site where five roads meet an old Turkish monastery has been demolished to make way for the first Baptist church in that town, so that here again the Cross has triumphed over the Crescent.

Away down in the south of Russia a number of Baptists arranged to spend " a quiet day with God " in the wilderness. It was kept a close secret. On the appointed morning, before sunrise, the little company of zealous men and women left their homes one by one, and two by two, taking some frugal fare

for the day's needs. Arrived at the camping spot, they commenced their devotions.

But the police had followed them, and every one was arrested, to be taken back to the town and to prison. There were between twenty and thirty of them, and they were all lodged in one cell. Any Russian prison is an abomination; this particular one was worse than the average. Picture this company of men and women huddled together in a cell almost as dark as a dungeon, with earthen floor covered with accumulated refuse. There were no sanitary conveniences. The only furniture was a rough table and a couple of wooden forms. To sleep the ordinary prisoner had to lie on the damp ground; but for these there was no room to lie down. The gaoler, moreover, was a churlish fellow, and he showed his resentment by offering the prisoners all manner of insult. The first thing he did was to remove the table and seats. Water was asked for and refused. No food was supplied all the first day, and on the second only a few mouldy crusts of bread.

Were these prisoners down-hearted? Not a bit. They gave themselves to singing and prayer, and as the day and the night were both alike to them in that dingy cell, they sang and prayed all through the night. The second and third days were passed in much the same way. On the morning of the fourth day a pleasant surprise was forthcoming.

Clean water was placed inside the door. Presently the table and seats were brought back. Later, the gaoler's wife brought quite a comfortable meal which she had prepared herself.

It was all explained before the day had passed. Though annoyed at first by the singing and prayers of these good people, the gaoler somehow found himself compelled to listen. During most of the third night he had sat on the ground outside the cell, with his back to the door. His conscience was pricked. Before many days had passed he had confessed Jesus Christ, and as the outcome of that prison revival, quite reminiscent of apostolic days, a church was founded which has to-day a large membership of earnest and devoted people.

Open-air meetings are absolutely prohibited in Russia. The distribution of tracts is also prohibited, though it is lawful to sell tracts. Copies of the Gospels, or parts of them, if printed, may be given away without any penalty attaching. Three members of Mr. Fetler's church went from house to house in St. Petersburg distributing tracts. They were taken to the police station and told that they were liable to a fine of twenty roubles or a week's imprisonment. As they professed ignorance, they were let off with a warning. But they had sown better than they knew.

A leading optician of St. Petersburg, with several shops, was a Roman Catholic. But he was in a



state of unrest about his soul, and had been seeking God for some time. One day a tract was put in his letter-box. It was a copy of Mr. Fetler's lecture on rejecting God. The janitor left it with the letters, and the optician found it on his table with his morning mail. When he saw the tract he asked who put it there. Nobody could explain. He went to the depot where the tract was printed, and told them this tract had arrested him. Ultimately he came into touch with Mr. Fetler's meetings and confessed Christ. He has a country residence at Lesnoi, and one of the first things he did after his conversion was to convert part of this house into a Gospel Hall, where there is now regular preaching of the Gospel.

Scarcely any of these Russian pioneer pastors have been “called” in the ordinary human—or shall I say inhuman—newspaper sense. They have been called of God unmistakably, and nobody may challenge their credentials. How many of them live they hardly know themselves.

I asked Pastor Pavloff what his stipend was, and he replied, “I can scarcely tell you.”

“But have you no salary? Which pastor among you receives the highest salary?”

“I do.”

“And what is the largest amount you have ever received in one year?”

“Fifty pounds; but this year, as editor of our

weekly paper, I am to receive an extra fifty pounds."

"What is the average with the others?"

"Nothing," he replied, with a smile.

"Then how do they live?"

"They live on what is given them by the Lord's people as they go from place to place. They can always be sure of food and a bed, but the money they get is very little. You see, our people are all so poor. How many of them get the money to pay their expenses to the Congress I don't know; it must have been a pinch."

I was told pathetic tales about some of these saintly pastors. How can a man be passing rich on fifty pounds a year in Russia, where everything is so dear? Clothes cost fabulous prices, and though all the pastors and delegates were neatly clad, and one or two of them wore broadcloth frock coats, it was whispered in my ear that they had probably been bought cheaply at a Jew's second-hand shop, and were most likely the discarded garments of a Russian nobleman!

## CHAPTER IV

### A STUDY IN CONTRASTS

IN Moscow, with a population of 1,000,000 souls, there are 1,500 churches, and twice that number of drinking shops. One Sunday morning I stood with about 5,000 people throughout a service in St. Saviour's Cathedral, which lasted for nearly three hours. The cathedral is of glistening white stone, surmounted by gold-capped domes. It cost 28,000,000 roubles, or nearly £3,000,000. The interior is lavish beyond description, wonderful frescoes by famous painters cover the dome, the walls are rich in vari-coloured marble and gold. The Bishop's mitre, which he wore at the sacrament, cost 500,000 roubles. The choir of men and boys, arrayed in scarlet and gold robes, discoursed Gregorian music that was intoxicating. In its appeal to the senses the whole service was magnificent. The prayers, particularly that for the Tsar, were dramatic in the extreme; but, like the whole service, it was in Slavonic—an unknown tongue to all who listened.

It was a wonderful sight to see that vast concourse of men and women standing on the cold stone floor through the long service, reverent and

devout, crossing themselves every few minutes, and at longer intervals pushing the crowd back while they flung themselves prostrate on the floor and kissed the pavement. The supreme moment was the occasion when the deacons closed the front gates of the altar and drew the curtains to hide the Bishop from view while he alone partook of the sacrament. Finally, there was the Benediction, and then the congregation filed past the Bishop in front of the altar, kissing first his hand and then the cross which he held. Generally the people were poor and unkempt, and of a sad countenance. All through the service dozens of priests in procession bearing large salvers suspended from their necks by brass chains solicited alms for innumerable charities, and these were mostly piled high with coins, but they were all copper coins, in no case exceeding ten kopeks, and for the most part two, three and five kopeks, which is the humblest of Russian money.

Contrast this with the first meeting of the Baptist brethren which I attended in St. Petersburg. It was Saturday night, and the meeting was for believers only. There were some 300 present—the sexes being about equally represented; if anything, the men predominated. Russia is perhaps the only country in Europe where more men than women go to church. As I was early, I stood in the vestibule and watched the people as they came in. Their faces were good to look upon. They glowed

with happiness and cleanliness. The average Russian does not believe in soap; the Russian Baptist plainly does.

These were also poor people, with one or two exceptions; but they were all neatly dressed—the women in simple cotton blouses and dark skirts, the men in rough tweeds. They were so happy that it might have been a wedding instead of a religious meeting more or less under the ban and attended by spies from the ranks of the secret police.

Five things specially impressed me. Nobody, whether male or female, wore or carried a hat into the meeting-room. The Russian people certainly do not share Paul's idea that it is unbecoming for a woman to appear in public with her head uncovered. The majority of the women came either hatless or, as is most common, wearing a simple handkerchief or mantilla on the head, which was removed in the vestibule. Even the men showed a touch of vanity, for most of them paused in the vestibule, and, taking a small comb from their pockets, used it quite caressingly on their hair. The self-respecting Russian is undoubtedly proud of his hair.

Secondly, every person deposited an envelope on the rough deal table which stood at the door in the ante-room. It was the weekly voluntary offering for the support of the work of God. There was neither number nor name on the envelope. The gifts were anonymous. The giving was done cheer-

fully and in order, and though I never saw inside one of those envelopes, I am positive the contents would by comparison put to shame the average contribution of English and Australian church-goers. Every envelope spoke eloquently of sacrifice and loving generosity. At the cathedral it was copper; here, I am sure, it was silver.

Thirdly, every believer came provided with a Bible and hymn-book. The women brought theirs in plain black satchets fastened with a button, and carried in their hands. The men had theirs wrapped neatly in paper. The satchet for women and the portfolio for men are quite an institution in Russia. Among the poorer people, failing the portfolio, as in this instance, paper is employed.

Fourthly, the general salutation of brethren and sisters alike was to kiss each other on the cheek. There was no hand-shaking. Brethren greeted brethren and sisters greeted sisters with a holy kiss. It was my first experience of the apostolic practice, and not a little embarrassing, though the earlier experience was as nothing to what followed at the Congress. I asked one of my lady interpreters whether this form of salutation was ever general, and was told that at Eastertide brethren and sisters were free to kiss each other promiscuously. I said I was glad it was not Eastertide, or I should not have been able to look my wife in the face when I returned home! And yet it was no subject for

amusement. As I came to know these people I realised the beauty and sacredness of this salutation. It was an expression of the love they bore for one another in the fellowship of the Gospel.

Lastly, nearly every person on entering the meeting-house, before taking a seat, walked up the aisle to the preacher's table and deposited a half-sheet of notepaper. By the time the meeting commenced there was a pile of perhaps two hundred sheets, and the number increased as late comers arrived. They were requests for prayer. The practice probably had its origin in the custom of the Greek Church, where the people hand the priests the names of their dead with requests for prayer. These petitions, however, were prayers for the living.

It was a never-to-be-forgotten experience as Pastor Fetler, early in the service, took those requests one by one and read them. They brought one very near to the heart of these people of God. There was no scampering of the petitions. Each was taken reverently and presented at the Throne of Grace. The character of them touched the tenderest chords, and many of them, as they were read out, filled hearts as well as eyes with tears. Everybody was invited to join in presenting the petitions. In some cases a dozen or more men and women rose and prayed aloud simultaneously, with the whole company praying in more subdued tones

as a sort of running accompaniment, as they sat ; yet there was no confusion. It revealed the spiritual passion of these people for the souls of their countrymen.

Next came personal testimonies from believers, not concerning their own spiritual condition or experience, but as to personal service for Jesus Christ. One spoke of personal work among some fifty sailors at the ships in port. A young man had brought an atheist neighbour whom he had led to Christ. Interspersed were revival choruses, such as "The Lion of Judah" and "I believe in Thy name, Lord Jesus." As an expression of spiritual fervour it exceeded any Methodist love-feast or camp meeting that, as a boy, I had ever witnessed in the Motherland.

Pastor Fetler gave me my first public welcome to St. Petersburg, and interpreted what I had to say in reply. Then the whole company of 300 believers stood and sent their greetings to Australia. Afterwards all prayed audibly, as they stood, for the Christians in Australia, that they might be found faithful.

Pastor Pavloff followed with an address on Christian unity based on the words, "It is good to dwell together in unity." In 1884, when he first set foot in St. Petersburg, and three years before being sent into exile, the friends gave him railway tickets and told him to get out again as



quickly as he knew how. Now he was received and welcomed without risk of gaol or exile. A pastor from Siberia told how in fourteen years in his district about 5,000 believers had confessed Christ. In the last six weeks before he had left to attend the Congress 268 souls had joined the church. All the Siberian villages, he reported, were turning to Christ.

Soon after ten this meeting came to an end and every one left the hall. Just before eleven o'clock they came back, but not alone. They had been out into the streets and slums of St. Petersburg looking for the lost, the careless, the indifferent, and compelling them to come to what is known as the weekly midnight meeting. They brought more than enough to fill the hall.

I have seen many midnight meetings for the reclamation of the submerged masses, but none that impressed me with such an overpowering sense of sadness as this one in St. Petersburg. It represented the human refuse of the city. Men and women alike were dissolute, drunken, ill-clad, cold, and hungry, and they came eagerly in the hope, at least, of finding warmth and rest. Some of them found much more than that. A score or so professed to have found salvation. The meeting lasted an hour, and at the stroke of twelve was dismissed, as the law required. Numbers had waited in the vestibule, on the stairs, and outside in the streets

from seven-thirty till twelve on the chance of getting in.

During the week the priests of the Orthodox Church had been summoned to confer as to how best to spoil the influence of the Baptist Congress. They had done their best to prevent the Congress being sanctioned by the authorities, and by anonymous letters had even threatened the life of the Minister for the Interior for allowing the Congress to be held ; but having failed in their purposes thus far, they met to devise methods to counteract the effect of the Congress. The plan adopted was that the priests should attend the public meetings incognito, create disturbances, and take notes of the addresses in order to controvert them later.

This was not an original plan of campaign, and it was doomed to failure at the most vital point. The Baptists had nothing to tell the people but the Gospel story, and men in all ages have discovered, as these priests are finding out, that the man who attempts to controvert the Gospel of the Grace of God is up against a hard proposition.

The priests made their first appearance at this midnight gathering, and when the meeting was about half through they began to interject. No notice was taken of them by the leaders. This did not please the priests, so they began to argue with Pastor Fetler, who responded by sitting down at

the harmonium and starting "All hail," to the tune "Diadem." Gradually the interruptions got worse, until half the people present were on their feet answering one another. Evidently the idea was to excite such a tumult as would attract the police, and in this they succeeded. Suddenly a police officer of high rank appeared at the door and marched up the aisle, leaving several subordinates at the door to cut off any retreat. Thereupon the priests waxed bolder, and charged the Baptists with creating the disturbance; but that was too much for the people who had come to listen, and they stood up and told the police officer the facts of the case with such earnestness and eloquence that he was soon satisfied as to who were responsible for the row, and gave the priest party one minute to get out. They went in less! A lady who was acting as my interpreter for the occasion kept me posted in all that transpired; but it did not need a knowledge of Russian or the aid of an interpreter to realise that a very critical situation had been created by these jealous priests, and at one time it looked as though some of the delegates were going to have a Congress to themselves in gaol. Had the priests succeeded, it might have resulted in the permission to hold the Congress being withdrawn. Happily, the failure of this first attack took their courage away, and they never openly returned to the assault, though many of them were present at the evening

meetings of the Congress later on and took elaborate notes.

The secular papers vindicated the Baptists and championed them against the priest party. This indicated a significant change of policy. When Pastor Fetler first began work in St. Petersburg the papers gave space to "these Baptists," as they called them, described their meetings, reported what was said, and even printed some of the hymns used at the services. As a result, people in the country who had never heard of the Baptists read about them, went to St. Petersburg to see and hear for themselves, and were won for Christ. The priests were quick to notice this, and brought sufficient influence to bear on the papers to induce them to discontinue their reports and ignore the Baptists in their columns. Happily, the Russian newspapers are now becoming more alive to the value of religious liberty, and all of them, except those owned or controlled by the priests, treated the Congress generously, sent reporters to every session, and commended the work and methods.

## CHAPTER V.

### IN SESSION WITH THE HERETICS

IN the language of the seasons, winter was rapidly approaching when I arrived in St. Petersburg. Officially, according to the Greek calendar, Wednesday, September 1st, 1910, heralded the first day of the Russian winter season, and prices correspondingly rose 20 per cent. in St. Petersburg. On the same day there was opened in that city the first National Congress of Russian Baptists, an event which marked the latest development towards religious liberty in Russia, and an outcome of the edict of 1905, proclaiming religious liberty in the Tsar's dominions.

Prior to 1905 it was not lawful for a Russian to be a Baptist or the member of any religious denomination outside the Orthodox Greek Church. German Baptists went to Russia many years ago, and made many converts among their own kith and kin ; but no Russian who became a Baptist—as many did—dare proclaim himself, unless he wished to experience the purgatorial penances of a Russian prison. In the same way the Roman Catholic and other Churches have been restricted from making

Russian converts. Quite recently a Roman Catholic priest had been sent to gaol for three months for christening a Russian baby.

Still, the new edict had given hope and courage to all who do not accept the teachings of the Orthodox Church and who desire liberty to worship according to conscience. The difficulty is that the edict, like everything Russian, is so vague and uncertain that it needs courage to place any satisfactory interpretation upon it, and still more to give practical effect to it. Only the year before a Russian Baptist Congress had been convened to be held in South Russia (Odessa) with the sanction of the authorities. About 100 delegates attended, but the proceedings had not got beyond the president's opening address when the police appeared on the scene and arrested the whole of the delegation, who were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment up to two months. As president, Pastor Pavloff received the maximum term of three months. Singularly enough, his presidential address had been based on the six words from the Song of Solomon, "The winter is over and gone." Before night came he had good reason to change his view, and in telling me of the incident he agreed that it was yet too early to apply Scriptural prophecy to Russia.

From this it will be seen that brave hearts were required to organise this first Baptist Congress in the capital of the Empire. Certainly it had been

authorised by the Minister for the Interior ; but that meant nothing more than a nominal permission to the delegates to meet, and that they might enter the place of meeting openly instead of secretly, as formerly. Beyond that, there was no guarantee that the proceedings would get further than the opening exercises, or that the final session would not be held in prison, with the delegates manacled and chained together and herded in one loathsome cell.

Yet of the eighty-six brave Russian men and women who were attending this Congress and risking their chances of personal liberty for the cause of religious liberty in the land they love with the genuine ardour of true patriots, thirty-two men and two women had already suffered imprisonment or exile, and some more than once.

Pastor Pavloff, the president of the Congress, as president of the Russian Baptist Union, had suffered exile in Siberia for two terms of four years each, and had been to prison for conscience' sake oftener than any Free Church passive resister, and under much worse conditions. At the expiration of his first term of banishment he returned to Tiflis, when the police demanded a pledge from him that he would not preach again. With a heroism characteristic of the man, he refused to give either his word or his signature, and in the same year (1891) he was arrested and sentenced to a further period of banishment.

Another delegate, Elder Pramenchoff by name, had a unique record. In 1885 he was exiled to Orenburg without trial, and kept there for two years. In 1893 he was exiled to Elizabetopol (Siberia); all his civil rights were taken away; his property was confiscated; he was chained hands and feet. This last was a life sentence, but owing to the birth of the heir to the throne he was released. During exile he was called upon to work with the criminal gangs. For seven months and a half he never had his chains off, day or night. Altogether, though only fifty-six years of age, he had been in prison fifty-two times in twenty-one different prisons, covering a continuous term of eight years. Twice his house was destroyed. Three times he was nearly beaten to death by the police. On leaving his last exile no shoes were given him, and he had to walk 264 versts (about 280 English miles) to Orenburg. On every occasion, directly he was released, he began to preach again. When I met him he was still not allowed to return to his native town, and was practically an exile at large.

Besides Russians, the delegates included eighteen Germans, five Letts, five Esthonians, four Poles, two Finns, one Jew, one Englishman, and one Australian. They hailed from Siberia, the Caucasus, the Baltic, the Caspian and Black Seas, from Finland, from Poland, and the Ural Mountains; indeed, from every part of the great empire. All of them were



poor men and women, who with difficulty were able to defray the cost of the journey. All had travelled by slow trains at the cheapest rate, a luxury which nobody who has travelled in Russia will appreciate. It was a picturesque company, and together they presented a galaxy of heroes which any country might be proud of.

The calling of the roll was no formal matter. It took about two hours. The identity of every delegate had to be proved, and this occasioned trouble in more than one instance. Each delegate's ticket had to be closely scrutinised. The Congress had been sanctioned under rigid restrictions, and it was recognised that the secret police would be watching every detail. About half-way through the roll-call there was a flutter of excitement near the door. An army officer appeared in the doorway, and this was interpreted to mean that the police had come. The president, however, was quick to notice that the officer was wearing the official delegate's metal badge, and invited him to the front. There he was identified as a member of a Baptist Church in South Russia, and a fully accredited delegate to the Congress, and as such was cordially welcomed. He is an army surgeon.

The Baptist World Alliance was officially represented by its European Commissioner, the Rev. Charles T. Byford, who conveyed greetings, and was received with many affectionate expressions of

welcome. Greetings by letter were read from the Revs. Dr. Clifford, F. B. Meyer, J. H. Shakespeare and J. W. Ewing, members of the Baptist World Alliance Executive.

The only other English-speaking delegate was the representative from Australia. Russians measure distance by days rather than miles, and the delegates were amusingly curious in their inspection of a comrade who had travelled forty-two days' journey by water and three by rail to attend the Congress, and who told them that their calendars were fourteen days and their clocks twelve hours behind those in Australia. At the close of the session he received more than a cordial welcome. It was characteristically Russian, and correspondingly overpowering. These Russian Baptists, who, as I have said before, follow the example of the early disciples and apostles, and "greet one another with a holy kiss," literally fell upon the Australian and hugged him with the ardour of Russian bears.

Nobody would have suspected from the generally quiet demeanour of the delegates that they were met under any sort of ban, and that their proceedings were being closely watched by the police. There was no disquieting element at the opening morning session, but at the afternoon session a Government architect appeared, and proceedings were delayed until he had inspected the building (a licensed public hall, the use of which had already been

approved) to see if any objections could be taken to it as a suitable meeting-place for a congress. Apparently he did not discover anything to warrant any proscription, and left in solemn grandeur.

On the second day there was another brush with officialdom. Prayer was offered for the Tsar and Royal Family, the Ministers of State, and members of the Duma ; and the president, who led, thanked God that liberty had been granted to them as Baptists to meet and discuss their needs. Then it was resolved to send the following telegram to His Imperial Majesty, who was at the time in Germany : " The all-Russian Baptist Congress at St. Petersburg, after prayer for the health and prosperity of Your Royal Highness and the Royal Family, lay at your feet our loyal greetings." A further sense of loyalty prompted the delegates to rise spontaneously and sing the National Anthem, but instead of the words " death to his enemies," and " Tsar of the Orthodox," they substituted " May peace reign within " and " Tsar of all Russia."

Throughout the Congress the police were in evidence, taking copious notes, and the guard at the door was changed promptly every hour.

To English or Australian eyes and ears the proceedings of a Congress in Russia are strange indeed. This first Congress of Russian Baptists was the most decorous public gathering I, as a newspaper man, had ever attended—certainly it was the most orderly

assembly of Baptists I have known. It was more like a Quakers' meeting than anything else. There was no applause. There were no interjections. Any impression made by the speakers was unobservable in the faces of the delegates. The effect of a speech or a discussion was only known when a vote came to be taken.

There was no competition among delegates to catch the president's eye. Delegates who wished to speak on any question before the Congress quietly rose and remained standing until the president should name them. There was often the spectacle of a dozen or more delegates standing and waiting to be named. If they got tired of waiting, as was frequently the case, they sat down. Sometimes the president made up his mind that enough had been said on a given subject, and everybody standing resumed his seat without a murmur.

From the opening session to the last on the eighth day of meeting there was not a ripple of excitement or disorder concerning anything that came before the Congress in the shape of business. Unless one was familiar with the undercurrents, everything must have appeared stereotyped and dull. The only occasions for excitement were due to the presence and conduct of the police officers, who were watching affairs on behalf of the Government.

All congresses and conferences in Russia are of the same nature. The strict decorum, the unemo-

tional speeches, the immobile countenances, are the fruit of centuries of repression. Congresses are permitted only under cast-iron regulations. The secret police are always present incognito, and the people are afraid to open their mouths freely lest they should be misunderstood or misinterpreted by the police.

It takes a brave man to speak his mind in Russia. All the delegates at this Congress were brave men and women who had suffered more or less for conscience' and righteousness' sake. And they did not hesitate to speak their minds ; but as in this instance the programme of subjects discussed had been sanctioned by the authorities, their course seemed clear. Yet who could say ? Permission to hold the Congress did not render the delegates immune from police interference or imprisonment if the authorities saw fit to change their minds, as they have an unhappy knack of doing in Russia ; or if the police chose to misinterpret anything said. Yet it was marvellous to note how calm these delegates were throughout. There was certainly no fear of man before their eyes, though danger lurked in the corner of every policeman's eye, and the delegates were fully aware that traps had been set to take them unawares.

But the danger was outside the Congress hall rather than inside. Wherever the delegates went they were shadowed by the secret police. One night

at the Mission House, just after tea, a group of delegates were sitting round the table eagerly listening to the story of a brother from the south who had passed through great tribulation, and who as a special favour to myself and Mr. Byford was relating some of his experiences. Suddenly a lady hurried up, and excitedly addressing another lady who was interpreting for our benefit, asked: "Sprechen sie Deutsch?" On being answered in the affirmative, she gave her warning. It was this: "Be careful what you say; there are spies present." It was true. The secret agents, all unknown, had been sitting at tea with us!

Is it any wonder that the average Russian keeps a silent tongue in his head? The people live in constant terror of the police, are afraid to trust anybody, and by long years of bitter experience have learned that silence is their most effective weapon of defence. It is most difficult to get them to talk, especially about themselves. Had it not been for the fact that I went to Russia in the fellowship of the Gospel, and was received in the spirit of that fellowship by these devoted men and women, I should never have learned the story of their persecutions. Nothing else would have persuaded them to take me into their confidence.

It must not be inferred from this that these Russian Baptists are people of a morose temperament and long, sad faces or strangers to joy. On

the contrary, they are an extremely happy and joyous people. God has anointed them with the oil of gladness above their fellows, and they have counted their sufferings as not worthy to be compared with the glory that has already been revealed to them. The Russians are naturally warm-hearted and big-hearted—very quiet and reserved, it is true ; but they feel deeply, and when touched exhibit an emotion which corresponds to that of the Welsh.

As already explained, Mr. Byford, representing the Baptist World Alliance, and the writer were the only two persons at the Congress who were not Russians. At one point in the discussion a delegate asked that Mr. Byford should speak. He was promptly told, " You must first pray for the day when he will be allowed to speak." Later on Mr. Byford essayed to speak through an interpreter, and the police captain immediately protested. This led to an argument between the police officer and the president. Meanwhile, Mr. Byford proceeded with his speech and had finished before the argument was concluded.

The opening address by Pastor Fetler revealed the spirit of the Congress. Translated, it read as follows :—

" Brethren, we see from the words we have read (the Bible lesson) that we must pray for all men. We have prayed for the Congress—for ourselves. Now we must pray for all Russia. We are going

to ask God to send us workers full of the Holy Ghost. We hear from all parts that workers are needed. The blood of Christ should be applied to the whole of Russia; there is so much sin and unbelief. If we forget others we shall get dried up ourselves. Ours is a little Church; but I believe all the members are eager for the salvation of others. While that spirit exists we shall prosper. Let us pray for the salvation of Russia. Our next prayer must be for all the world—not simply for ourselves, for the Congress, for Russia, but for all the world. We have here a brother from Australia. Half the world is heathen, and I think that largely the fault is in the churches having grown too narrow by thinking only of their own interests and forgetting the needs of the whole world.

“ But the Bible injunction does not end here. We are told to pray for the Kings and Rulers. There are some people, I am afraid, even among believers, who despise Rulers. This is not at all according to God’s Word. If we prayed more for Kings and Rulers we should have freedom more readily, for everything is given us by prayer. It will be the same if we pray to-day for our Emperor as we have never prayed before—not formal prayers, to be heard only by those under this roof, but prayers that will rise through and above the roof to the ears of the Almighty.”

Passionate prayers for the Tsar and Royal



Family were followed by the singing of " God keeps the Emperor."

The business of the Congress was entirely confined to the work of the Russian Baptist Union and the associated churches, such as methods of propaganda and ways and means. The form of a petition to be sent to the Minister for the Interior regarding the new statutes granting liberty of worship to Dissenters was discussed, and a commission was appointed to examine the statutes. A good deal of consideration was given to Sunday-school work. One delegate naively remarked: " When I was a boy we used to say that the young people were kept back by the older brethren. As I got older I began to think they had good reason for it. But to-day matters are altogether reversed. The older people have no place with the younger generation. They are not wanted in their meetings. It is the societies of young people who are the oppressors to-day, not the older people."

Some of the discussions took what, to a visitor, was an amusing turn, though the delegates were serious enough about it. There was a proposal, for instance, to insure the elders of the churches against death, as, getting no salaries, it was impossible for them to make the provision for their survivors themselves. The proposal was negatived, chiefly on the plea that it would prejudice his work if it could be said that the elder was looking after the

future for his family as well as the present for himself, though where the present comes in for a man who gets no stipend it would be hard for any but a Russian Baptist to discover. Their own answer would be that they do not labour for the bread that perisheth, and are happy to be labourers together with God if only their bread shall be given and their water sure. The incident serves to illustrate how jealous these devoted men are lest they should be judged careful concerning material things.

In regard to the weekly denominational paper, which it was proposed to publish, there were difficulties in the way of finding an editor. These Russians had their own ideas as to editors and their work. The opinion was freely expressed that a pastor should not have any time to edit a paper, and further, that the editor of a weekly paper should not have time for anything else.

In nothing was the devotion of these people to their work more strikingly shown than in their manner of living during this fortnight in St. Petersburg. No comfortable quarters among fellow Christians were available. Hotels were beyond their means. Scarcely one of them had a rouble (two shillings) to jingle in his pocket. What did they do? They followed apostolic precedent and had all things in common. The whole of the delegates slept each night on the floor in one small room, the men in one apartment and the women in

another, at the half-finished Mission House. To save their bones each was provided with a rough mattress, and for the rest each had to shift as best he could for himself. The meals were represented by the scantiest of fare. It mainly consisted of black bread and tea. At one special meal (dinner) at which Mr. Byford and myself were guests, the menu was comparatively sumptuous. It comprised salt pork and potato soup; stewed steak, potatoes and carrots; porridge (half rice and half wheat); and black bread. Butter is an unheard-of luxury in the ordinary Russian's home; at the hotels it is charged for as an extra.

## CHAPTER VI

### BUILDING A HERETIC CHURCH

IN England or Australia the laying of a foundation-stone for a new church is a very simple matter. It is not so in Russia, especially when it happens to be a heretic church. It took weeks for Pastor Fetler to persuade the authorities that the erection of a Baptist Church in St. Petersburg would not involve any revolutionary attack on the dynasty or bring any dire peril to the throne. Of course, the authorities knew as well as Pastor Fetler that the mission of the Baptists was one of peace and righteousness, but they had to pretend otherwise. Their policy was to make the way as smooth as possible, and so they introduced all sorts of concessions and invented all sorts of excuses. By the time I reached St. Petersburg all the difficulties had been removed, and apparently everything was plain sailing.

As a rule, you never know in Russia what is going to happen as the result of official interference, but in this instance Pastor Fetler had been optimistic. In the first place he had to submit the plans of the church to the Town Council, and by that body they

were rejected on the plea that the plans were not well drawn. "What do you mean?" asked the architect. "Why, you have not shown the seats!" Well, new plans were prepared, and the Town Council, without expressing any further opinion, sent them on to the police prefect. That gentleman in turn disapproved of the plans, and ordered them to be remodelled. That done, the senior inspector and the committee again inspected and condemned on terms that made the plans and the contracts of no effect and the site useless.

The people prayed about it for some time and then interviewed the Minister for the Interior. They were received very kindly, and explained the whole matter and mentioned the date that had been fixed for the stone-laying. The Minister rang up the head of the Technical Department for Buildings and explained the situation, and that official advised them to go on in defiance of the police. They saw the Prefect, who, as a further excuse for delay, ordered them to petition the Tsar for permission. This petition was taken to the Minister, and he ruled that sufficient justification had not been shown by the Prefect for petitioning the Tsar, and declined to forward the petition. After all this, the matter had to go back to the Town Council, and a further delay of a fortnight was experienced. Finally, the Minister was induced to force the hands of the police,

and Pastor Fetler went on his way rejoicing, believing that the final word of official sanction had been uttered.

His optimism was scarcely justified. The programme allowed for the foundation-stone ceremony to take place as the last and crowning feature of the Congress. The bombshell fell before the Congress was half over. One morning there was an unusual delay in opening the Congress proceedings. Nearly two hours went by. The delegates sat and looked at each other mysteriously, but nobody understood the cause. Presently Pastor Fetler arrived. At previous sessions he had seemed to be treading on air. To-day his feet dragged. He looked worried. The reason was soon made clear. He had received peremptory notice that the foundation-stone ceremony must not take place. The authorities refused to allow the building operations to be continued.

Here was a nice set-back. Everything was ready for the ceremony. The invitations had been issued. Building operations had been in full swing for weeks. Most of the material was on the ground, and now the whole thing was prohibited. What was to be done? If the delegates at this Congress had been Australian, English, or American Baptists they would have risen up like an army of suffragettes; they would have marched to the office of the responsible Minister; they would have demanded

permission to do this thing ; and—they would have been shot down for their pains or hurried off to prison. But these Russian Baptists had a better way—the apostolic way. They gave themselves to prayer. There was no hysteria, nothing in their demeanour or in the character of their prayers to indicate excitement. In quietness and confidence they testified their faith in God and realised their strength, and then sent Mr. Fetler to get the answer.

Next morning Mr. Fetler appeared with a less anxious face. He had interviewed the Minister, who had again received him courteously, and after listening to his tale of woe, had replied, "Go in peace, brother ; we will help you all we can." It was not, however, till the night before the date fixed for the ceremony that official sanction was formally conveyed to Mr. Fetler.

There was not going to be any further delay if the brethren could help it. Immediately on receiving permission from the Minister, the hour for the ceremony was changed from 2.30 p.m. to 9.30 a.m., so that the authorities should not have time in which to change their minds.

The delegates, who were sleeping on the site of the new building, rose early for prayer. To their dismay it was raining heavily, and to all appearances the ceremony was doomed. They went in to prayer and prayed that if it pleased God

that the rain should continue they might have the ceremony in the rain, or if not that He would send the sunshine. When they rose from their knees and looked outside the rain had stopped, and before the ceremony began the sun was shining.

The church is to cost 100,000 roubles (or £10,000), and includes a Mission House and suite of rooms requisite to a denominational headquarters. It is a sort of church and church-house combined. The building is two-storeyed, of brick on stone, the walls 32 inches thick, the bricks 10 inch by 5 inches by 3 inches. There is a large hall, with galleries to seat 2,500, two smaller halls to seat 200 each, reception rooms, residential rooms, kitchen, heating and ventilating machinery, a book store, printing and publishing department, and two Sunday-school rooms.

This church at St. Petersburg occupies a strategic position, because St. Petersburg is the seat of Government, but the parish extends as far as Moscow. Moscow is important as the centre of Russian life. It is an educational centre with 60,000 students, who if influenced for Christ will carry the enlightenment of the Gospel all over the empire. There are 60,000 cabmen, moreover, who come to Moscow from all the provinces and centres for the winter, and who if won for Christ will take back the gospel to the villages, for they are nearly all peasant





LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN ST. PETERSBURG



farmers in the summer and droshki drivers in the winter.

The significance of Pastor Fetler's work in St. Petersburg lies here: Hitherto the Evangelical religious movement has been more prominent in the south than in the north of Russia. Lord Radstock's visit to St. Petersburg and the conversion of Madame Tchertkoff (whose husband commanded the Russian troops in Warsaw), along with her sister, the wife of the late Colonel Pashkoff, gave the work in St. Petersburg its start, especially among the aristocracy. Lord Radstock's first meetings were held in Colonel Pashkoff's house, which is now the French Embassy. Previously the Pashkoffs were of the Orthodox Greek faith. On professing conversion to the Evangelical faith the Government asked the Colonel to write out his creed and say what he really professed. He declined, simply declaring, "I am a Christian—a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ." Refusing to declare himself further, they prohibited him from preaching, and asked him to promise not to preach. He refused to promise, and was sent into exile. He went to England and preached to his heart's content in the open-air and elsewhere. Then he went to France and bought a gospel van, with which he itinerated, but met with great opposition from the French Roman Catholics, who at one place nearly drove his van into the sea. Next he went to Austria with

his van. Though the Colonel is dead, the van is still intact, on an estate owned by the family in Austria.

From the drawing-rooms of St. Petersburg the Gospel went forth to the kitchens, to the maids, to the janitors, to the coachmen, and so the work spread. Madame Tchertkoff is still living, at an advanced age. She is a woman of queenly presence and great force of character. She abounds in good works and is a noblewoman in the truest sense. It was one of my greatest privileges in Russia to be a guest at her table, to enjoy her hospitality, and converse with her concerning the things of God and the coming of Christ's kingdom in Russia. The Congress met in a hall built by Madame Tchertkoff for the preaching of the gospel. "She is the best friend I have!" said Pastor Fetler to me.

It is important to recognise, as the Baptists are doing, the power of literature in Russia, and the need for sending out not only gospel preachers but printed books. Means are wanted with which to fight the Holy Synod, who at present have the monopoly to print Bibles. The Holy Synod only prints Bibles with the Apocrypha. Three years ago the Bible Society persuaded the Holy Synod to print 20,000 copies of the Bible without the Apocrypha, but had to pay them for it, and then only succeeded through the intervention of powerful friends. As

showing the demand for the Bible, those 20,000 copies were sold in less than two years, but the Synod refused to print any more. Like the Vatican, the Holy Synod is not anxious to see the people reading the Bible for themselves. Consequently in comparatively few homes in Russia is there to be found a copy of the Bible.

Of Pastor Fetler, who is at the head of the Evangelical movement identified with the Russian Baptists in St. Petersburg, it may be said without exaggeration that he is one of the most remarkable men of his generation. Educated at Spurgeon's College, London, he passed among the students as quite an ordinary man, save for certain eccentricities of manner and character. It is in his own land and among his own people that William Fetler stands out as the great man that he undoubtedly is. Strictly speaking, he is a Lett, rather than a Russian, and though the difference is not much to an outsider it means a good deal to a Lett. The story of the Lettish Baptists, their heroism amid barbarous persecution, and their devotion to the Evangelical faith, makes a page in Russian history that would put Christians in more favoured lands to shame. But that page has not yet been written, much less printed, and it has only come down in fragments by word of mouth from parents to children. Among all the sections of Russian Christians, however, there is none whose zeal for the Kingdom of God

has been more ardent or enduring than that of the Letts.

Pastor Fetler is a child of this branch of the great Russian family, and the fervour and devotion of the whole race seems to have been born again in him. Russia is on his heart. He honestly believes that Russia will be the greatest Christian nation in Europe, and already it must be admitted there is much to justify his sublime faith. His passion for the souls of his countrymen is like a fever in his blood. He is an orator in the highest and truest sense. His power over large audiences is electric.

I first met him in his room at the half-finished mission premises in St. Petersburg, and before I had been talking to him an hour I was rude enough to tell him he was a madman. That was how his conduct impressed me. He laughed me off by saying that most of his friends had anticipated me in my verdict.

Think of it! He had already been living for weeks on the site of this building, whose erection brick by brick he was watching with jealous solicitude. The foundations were under water. There was not a dry brick or a daub of paint in the building. He had taken possession of his study before the walls were up. I found the plaster wet on the walls, wet paint on the doors, and the general mess and muddle of a builder's stock-in-trade everywhere

visible. Yet this was being occupied as Mr. Fetler's study and living-room. His desk was in one corner, his bed in another. He might almost as well have been a prisoner in the fortress not far away on the banks of the Neva, where the dungeons, three deep, are all below the water-line.

But none of these things concerned him. Thoughts of his own comfort and safety never occurred to him. He was recklessly indifferent to everything but his work. The furniture, the books, the pictures in his study, were eloquent of the man's character. On his desk was a framed card, bearing these words :—

“ I cared not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through, so that I could but gain souls to Christ. While I was asleep I dreamed of these things, and when I waked the first thing I thought of was this great work. I longed to be a flame of fire, continually glowing in the service of God, and building up Christ's Kingdom to my latest, my dying moment.”

They were, of course, the words of David Brainerd, one of the first apostles to the North American Indians. But they were literally and as sincerely the words of William Fetler. A character sketch running into chapters could not more completely describe the man. His wonderful personality lays hold of you, mesmerises you. His moral courage amounts to sanctified audacity. Russian

officials, from the highest to the lowest, stand in awe of him. He has great influence in high places, because great men admire his splendid courage and devotion, smile at his audacity, and are attracted by his personality.

When the Congress was sitting and the police were busy taking notes to report to the Minister for the Interior, William Fetler was the least perturbed man in the room. When the Congress wanted a man to stand before the Minister and obtain permission to do something that had been forbidden, they sent William Fetler, and the Minister could not refuse him.

But it is in his power over large audiences in preaching the Gospel that William Fetler stands out so prominently as a great man. He goes through an audience like a flame of fire. People are spellbound by his arresting and convincing eloquence. As a journalist I have vivid recollections of most of the outstanding English and American evangelists of the last thirty years, but I have never heard a man whose preaching so pricked men to the heart. It is withal winsome in its tenderness, and what Dr. Jowett has termed the "wooing note" is never absent. I heard Mr. Fetler preach eight or nine times to audiences of between 2,000 and 3,000, and every time the number of people unable to gain admission was larger than the number inside the building.



His preaching has created a soul-hunger for the Gospel message in St. Petersburg, and to such an extent that since the date of my leaving he has been compelled to engage six or seven of the largest halls available in the city to meet the demand.

## CHAPTER VII

### TACTICS OF THE REACTIONARY PARTY

GUTCHKOFF, the famous Duma leader, had said quite recently that the only hope for Russia lay in a religious revival, both within and without the Orthodox Church. The reactionary party, which has behind it the whole weight and influence of Orthodoxy, has, curiously enough, persuaded itself that everything depends upon preventing such a revival; accordingly, the spectacle of a National Congress of Russian Baptists led the party to declare itself with fierce invective.

Several days before the Congress was opened a meeting of the Orthodox clergy was held in St. Petersburg, at which it was decreed that "steps must be taken to stop the movement created by the preaching of the Baptists."

It was further arranged to hold services in the Orthodox Churches all day during the week of the Baptist Congress, and thus oppose its influence. Moreover, the priests were invited, through the public press, to attend the meetings of the sectarians, in order to learn their methods, but it was suggested

that they should discard clerical dress for the occasion.

This policy was adopted with unsatisfactory results. Priests did attend the public meetings of the Congress disguised as laymen, and created scenes by their violent interruptions, which in one case at least, as related in a previous chapter, led to the interposition of the police and the summary retirement of the intruders.

Not content with the result of these tactics, the reactionaries invoked the aid of the leading press organs. The *Novoye Vremya*, the most influential paper in Russia, allowed the Goliath of the Philistines, in the person of the great Publicist Menchikoff, to attack the heretics in a three-column article, which was assumed to be the last word on the subject. Some extracts will be sufficient to show the temper, policy, and perspective of the reactionaries towards this new movement.

"These Baptists," says Menchikoff, "are decadents (decados). They are descending from the heights of civilisation granted to men, and are returning to primitive forms. This is a mere fashion. Why should we put off our fine clothes and deny ourselves good things to imitate poor foreigners? All heretics think they are after true beauty, but they are wrong. As in art, politics, commerce, any return to things which have gone before is a sign of decadence.

"I believe in God, but I do not believe in those naive fellow-countrymen who say that God must be irrational. I respect every religious feeling, but still I prefer the Orthodox Church, though it may have some defects about it. The Orthodox Church is just as good as Catholicism, or Mohammedanism, or Buddhism, because it is a native growth suited to the national character.

"These Baptists are as geometrical figures compared with the rugged mountains for beauty. This return to the primitive is mere decadence. These Baptists are returning from the grand and beautiful Orthodox faith, thinking that in evangelism they will find beauty. In fact, they are not returning to evangelical truth, but to the Bible. They are Bible Christians—that is to say, Jews. If you listen attentively to the prayers, sermons, and hymns of the Baptists, you will notice one strong point—they acknowledge Christ, but they worship Jehovah, the Hebrew God of the Old Testament. They do this ignorantly. The Bible, the library of old books written before Christ, is not of Hebrew origin, but Babylonian, and this is what takes the upper hand with these sectarians—not the Gospels, but the Old Testament. They prefer the old covenant to the new, and they prefer primitive worship to the civilised."

"The Government is much to blame," this critic further proclaimed. "Does not the Govern-

ment make a great mistake under the pretext of religious freedom to give such power to this sect? You cannot bind the conscience, and punish a man for his faith, but is it in the interests of the Government to give such full freedom? The Government has enemies, and bears with them whilst they are scattered in units, should it be permitted to these enemies to come together and grow as rapidly as clouds bearing a thunderous aspect? They are rousing the masses.

“ These Baptists secretly have a deadly hatred against the State, and are therefore enemies of the true Russian people. It is false for them to say that their aim is the salvation of souls. They do not care for the Fatherland. These are Jewish Christians. Baptists pay duties and pay Government taxes, but still they are strangers and dream of a Canaan, a new Jerusalem, a dream-state of humanity. Leave this people to grow, and when they realise their strength they will be enemies.

“ Until now the masses have been as one by one religion, and in subjection. The Government must stand as sentinels, and preserve the precious nationality, the one-soul solidarity of the nation. For this cause much blood was spilt, and to gain this end holy martyrs have suffered, and for thousands of years the Orthodox sermons have sounded and formed the spirit of the nation. There can be freedom of conscience, freedom of thought, but let

it be a national conscience, a national thought. We are perishing from anarchy and stormy thought, and fear of philosophy is so pressing on our educated classes that they are losing their faith. Is it wise for the Government to allow the common people to know differently, and to think otherwise than the Orthodox teacher?

"The appearance of these Protestants reminds us that they spilt blood all over Europe, and have produced hatred amongst peoples as never before. Germany, England, and France have passed through terrors impossible to describe through these reformers. We have crushed heresies in our time to preserve the unity of the nation. Must we have this dangerous experience again? Shall these people be allowed to become amongst those who are striving against the Government? The Church is being shattered by Nihilism. She has lost her hold upon the upper classes. Shall she lose her hold upon the lower classes by these decadents winning them? Certainly they carry into the region of faith not heathen but Jewish practices. This must not be allowed."

Such was the weapon with which the reactionaries had chosen to smite. Could anything be more illogical or unfair? In any other country such a manifesto would have been laughed to scorn. Unhappily, in Russia it had a deadly significance. It showed that whatever may be the letter of the 1905 edict granting religious liberty to the Russian

people, the spirit of it is to be challenged even to the point of bitter and relentless persecution.

Yet the flowing tide is with these Baptists in Russia, as with all who are fighting for freedom. The reactionaries are making the mistake of imagining that Mrs. Partington's broom is still equal to the task of sweeping the tide back.

The most effective answer that can be given to Mr. Menchikoff and his friends is being supplied by the Baptist World Alliance. At the Berlin Baptist World's Congress of 1908 two resolutions of far-reaching importance concerning the Baptist movement on the Continent were made. The first dealt with the education of the ministry, the second with the building of churches. Steps have now been taken to realise the first resolution by founding and endowing a great university to meet the needs of Russia and all south-eastern Europe.

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Sir Wyke Bayliss, writing about William Holman Hunt as the painter of Christ, sets down the following conversation of three young painters who stood together in a London studio. The painters were Holman Hunt, Rossetti, and Millais, the first members of the famous pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood:—

ROSSETTI: "Then we are agreed—we will all paint Christ. I have a friend who will serve as my model. I shall only need to add an aureole."

MILLAIS: "But I cannot paint what I have never seen, and I have never seen Christ. I can find a child, a beautiful woman, an old man. I will paint these in a carpenter's shop, which also I can see; and the story of the picture shall be the story of their lives. But it will not be a picture of Christ, it will be a picture of a carpenter's shop."

HOLMAN HUNT: "I will find out what Christ is like, that I may see Him with my own eyes. If I cannot find Him in the west I will find Him in the east. I will tear the secret from the stones of the city where He dwelt; from the sands of the desert where He hungered; from the waters on which He walked. I will find it and paint it as a real thing before I die."

There one gets behind the spirit of the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, founded by those three young men in their endeavour "to thrust its own stern code of artistic morals, its own fierce intensity of fanatically veracious vision, upon a generation that preferred suavity and carefulness and conventional draughtsmanship."

The story of the new Acts of the Apostles in Russia might be told in similar words. The brethren there represent in a higher and fuller sense the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The Greek Church has for centuries conformed to the suave, careful, and conventional. Rome has a friend, the Pope, whom she has painted as the model of Christ, and added an



aureole. The Greek Church has painted a young man, a beautiful woman, an old man, in a carpenter's shop, but it has not been the picture of Christ; it has been the picture of a carpenter's shop—and only a picture.

But a new school has arisen—a brotherhood of men who have seen the Christ and who are preaching a living, loving, saving Christ; and wherever these men preach crowds come to listen, are converted, and are baptised.

There is no country in the world offering richer dividends for Christian service than Russia. The fields are white to harvest. The people are ravenously hungry for the Gospel.

And here is the contrast between Roman Catholic countries like Spain, Italy, and France. The natural revulsion from the superstition and priestcraft of Rome is atheism, and the Protestant missionaries in those countries, as they told me, find it hard to counteract that natural drift by preaching the Gospel of the Grace of God “without money and without price.”

But the Greek Church, with all her faults, has taught her people reverence for God. The fact confronts one in every phase of Russian life, and makes the sowing of the good seed of the Kingdom much easier.

The evangelistic meetings of the Congress which I attended in St. Petersburg were only samples of

what is going on all over Russia, where Christ is being preached by obscure men and women consumed with a passion for the souls of men. They are preaching, not a traditional Christ, but a real and living Christ, whom their own eyes have seen and whose spirit they have caught. And these men and women, by their devotion and sacrifice, are going far to win Russia for Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER VIII

### A SIBERIAN HERO

RUSSIA has added a long list to the great cloud of witnesses of whom the world has not been worthy, and which has been increasing all through the centuries since the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews first attempted to catalogue them.

One of the outstanding and heroic figures among the Russian Baptists is Pastor Pavloff, the president of the first Congress of Russian Baptists. A man of commanding presence, large, square head, massive brain, and flowing beard, he might have stepped out from the illustrated pages of a family Bible as a typical priest of Levi.

It has been Pastor Pavloff's privilege "not only to believe in Him, but to suffer for His name" in a fashion quite unknown to modern Christians outside of Europe. I asked him how many times he had been in prison for righteousness' sake, and he replied, "Really, I have been there so often that I have lost count!" He was one of the first Russian Baptists, and was the first Russian Baptist evangelist.

Born in the Caucasus, at Tiflis, Pastor Pavloff

told me, he was converted at the age of fifteen. His parents were Molocans, a very old Russian sect having many of the characteristics of Quakers. Their faith is expressed in negative rather than in positive terms. For instance, they do not believe in the ordinances of baptism or the Lord's Supper, though they are an offshoot of the Greek Church. Neither do they believe in fasting, or in keeping the regular fast days imposed by the Orthodox Church. It was on account of this latter negation that they got their name, and, like many names inherited by religious sects, it was originally a term of derision. Moloco is the Russian word for milk, and the peasants in mockery styled them Molocans—that is, people who drink milk on fast days.

Young Pavloff united himself to the Baptists when they were only five or six strong in Tiflis. The first Baptist who came to Tiflis was a German named M. Calviet. He baptised Voronin, a Russian, and Voronin baptised Pavloff in the year 1871. By the efforts of these two the work increased and converts multiplied.

Four years later Pavloff went to Hamburg to study theology, and devoted a year to mastering the profoundest of all the sciences. There was no Baptist seminary then, so he had to be content to sit at the feet of a German preacher and also of Mr. John G. Oncken, founder of the German Baptists, the latter of whom ordained him as a missionary.



A TYPICAL RUSSIAN PASTOR.  
Recently returned from Siberian exile.



REV. J. UHR,  
Head of the Swedish Baptist Mission  
in Valencia, Spain



REV. C. T BYFORD (Baptist World Alliance), PASTOR PAVLOFF,  
AND PASTOR FETLER (reading left to right).



In 1876 he returned to his home at Tiflis and began to work and preach. Those were perilous days in the Tsar's dominions, and preachers outside the Orthodox Church received short shrift. Pavloff immediately came under the ban of the priests, and the police did the rest. He was condemned to exile and marched off to Orenburg, on the Siberian border. For four years he was under close police supervision, and was not allowed to leave the town.

Regaining his liberty in 1891, he returned to Tiflis, and the police demanded a pledge that he would not preach the Gospel. But he refused to give his signature, and in August of the same year he was on his way back to Siberia for a further period of four years' banishment. This time the authorities made him dispute with the Orthodox priests on such subjects as Baptism and Ikons, the object being to confound him before the people and refute his teaching. The object was not attained. Instead of hindering, this policy helped the young missionary. His audiences sometimes numbered as many as 300, who showed the keenest interest in his answers to the priests and in his preaching of the Gospel.

Moreover, men were converted, and this encouraged Pavloff to organise private meetings for prayer and the reading of the Scriptures. On one occasion about twenty Molocans, who had been banished, came to speak with him about the faith,

and several believed. Quietly and for the most part secretly, for fear of the police, the work spread, and while Pavloff was not allowed to leave Orenburg, his converts, and those who had heard him preach and were impressed, carried the message out into the villages and hamlets, so that when Pavloff returned the second time into exile he was overjoyed to find many professing faith in Jesus Christ and asking to be baptised. Every convert became a missionary in exile. During the latter months of Pavloff's second banishment nearly 200 were converted and baptised. And three churches were built and pastors left in charge.

From Siberia this devoted man of God went to Roumania, and lived for six years in Tulcea, where many were led to confess Christ. Then his old church at Tiflis called him back, and he gave six years to sowing the good seed of the Kingdom in that district amid signal manifestations of blessing. A call next came from Odessa, and at the time of the Congress in 1901 Pastor Pavloff had been labouring three years in that town, with abundant signs following.

Easter, 1905, when the edict forbidding any Russian to profess any other than the Orthodox Greek faith was repealed, was a time of great rejoicing. Exiles for their faith were allowed to return; but the terms of the new edict were so vague that nobody knew what it meant beyond the



fact that those who were not of the Orthodox faith were free to hold meetings under certain arbitrary conditions. Hitherto meetings had been held secretly, and those participating went and left, one by one, with the utmost caution so as not to attract attention, for attention meant prison.

Fifty years before the Memonites and German Baptists had been recognised by the Government and had rights, but Russians were not allowed to join them. Up to the granting of religious liberty in 1905, therefore, there were no Russian Baptists. At least, none were known to or recognised by the authorities. It was through the efforts of John G. Oncken, the German pioneer, that the Baptists went to Poland and Southern Russia. Evan Riabochaba and Michael Ratoschni were the two first Russians to confess the Baptist faith and labour in the south. The latter was still living at the end of 1910.

From the Caucasus the work spread to Manchuria, largely through the faithful testimony of the exiles. On the borders of the River Amur is the town of Blagovishchnisk. It is twenty-six days' journey from Odessa to Blagovishchnisk, and the road is stained with the blood of the men and women who were exiled for conscience' sake. To-day Siberia is alive with Baptist churches and messengers of the Cross. At Blagovishchnisk alone there are three large churches, and there are others at Lencoran

on the Persian border and at Kars on the Turkish frontier. Though persecuted, banished, imprisoned, the brethren went forward, casting the seed for a harvest which is now beginning to be reaped in such rich measure.

This does not mean that the millennium has come in Russia or that persecution has ceased. Pastor Pavloff explained the situation to me in these words :—

“ We cannot say that now we have full freedom. We have more liberty in the capital than in the country, for in St. Petersburg the priests and the police dare not do what is done in the country, and especially in the remote country districts. Sometimes they beat and almost kill the brethren. Just lately a company of our brethren were sent to prison on a plea of not having asked permission to meet, though permission had been asked and given. The instigators of this sort of treatment are always the priests. Last year I myself was in prison for two months in Odessa. We were only holding a picnic, but that was enough to send a number of us to gaol for varying terms. The Black Hundred play a prominent part in interfering with our meetings and in inciting to persecution. They profess to stand for everything that is old and orthodox. At the back of all, however, are the priests.

“ Our freedom is largely on paper. Still, there

is a measure of liberty, or we should have no right to hold this Congress. As it is, we have been put to immense trouble in making the arrangements, and every item on the programme had to be submitted to the authorities for official sanction."

## CHAPTER IX

### IN KINGS' PALACES

THE most terribly suggestive sight in all Russia is the Tsar's Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. It has been built in seven sections by successive Tsars. Each has added his own section and occasionally lived in it, the other sections remaining entirely undisturbed as they were at the time of the death of the previous Tsar. It seems a strange custom, until one recalls that no Tsar has ever died peacefully in his bed, that most of them have been murdered, and that for the remainder an air of mystery, to say the least, has clouded the circumstances of their death.

With this knowledge a visit to the Winter Palace becomes a gruesome pilgrimage. That sense was heightened in my case, for only a few months before the terrible scenes of "Bloody Sunday" had been enacted in the great square in front of the palace, and as I stood in the magnificent dining-room of gold, part of the suite of rooms of Alexander I., just as he had left them, the whole scene was so graphically detailed to me that I saw not an empty stone-paved square, but one piled with the corpses of men

who had risen against an intolerable yoke of bondage.

I was one of a large party of Russians who had been given permission by the Minister for the Interior to visit the Palace. We were carefully counted and marked for identification as we went in, but singularly enough no notice was taken of us as we passed out. All sorts of precautions are taken with visitors to the Palace. Having been forbidden by the police to take snapshot photographs in the streets, I was not surprised to have my camera confiscated immediately on passing the outside gates of the Winter Palace. But it was still more inconvenient to be deprived of one's overcoat. To have dreamt that one slept in marble halls is calculated to make the sleeper shiver, even when ensconced under warm blankets; but to be dispossessed of one's overcoat on a Russian winter's day in a cold, draughty palace was infinitely more uncomfortable.

Quite a regiment of officials accompanied us through the palace, and edged us in on every side. Anything we said or did was likely to be taken down and used as evidence against us. They watched us like detectives. If an official noticed anything irregular, he immediately notified his superior, and before we were allowed to proceed all the officials came together and held a council of war.

It was my notebook that first brought me under

observation. As an aid to memory I had been scribbling a few notes. I was promptly informed that this could not be allowed. I asked my friends to explain the situation, but they were afraid to do so. They were all Russians, and in Russia they have learned that when an official, whether a street policeman, a palace lackey, or, indeed, any man clothed in the authority of uniform, says "No," there is nothing for it but to obey. The incident made me sympathise with newspaper men in Russia. But being a newspaper man myself, and not a subject of the Tsars, I looked for a way out of the difficulty, and resorted to strategy. At the second warning I stuffed the notebook into my hip pocket and allowed the official to see me button the pocket. Then, waiting an opportunity, I smuggled the notebook up my left sleeve and only attempted to make notes when surrounded by other members of the party. My friends were my undoing. Their curiosity was annoying and excited suspicion. I could not persuade them to look away. They did not understand me. They watched my every movement, and appeared to be so frightened at the risks they thought I was running that I had to laugh. All the same their conduct gave me away, and for the third time I was warned. If I had been carrying a hat, the next device would have been easy, but my hat was with my overcoat and camera. I was not to be beaten, however, and in the end made



STATE ROOM IN THE TSAR'S PALACE AT MOSCOW





all the notes I desired without anybody's suspicion being further aroused. The restriction as to photographs is, under conceivable circumstances, perhaps reasonable; but the restriction as to note-taking is, to the newspaper man at least, senseless, and it is only as he remembers that he is in Russia that he becomes reconciled to the temporary intrusion upon his liberty.

The Winter Palace is crowded with memories of dead kings. Everywhere is revealed the dead hand of the past. Beds and bedrooms in which Tsars died or were assassinated remain just as they were at the time. Chief, perhaps, in historic interest are the rooms of Alexander II. There stands the little table on which he signed the emancipation of 40,000,000 serfs. The inkstand and the pen which he used are still lying there, and even his handkerchief. In the same room he met his fate. Russians, as they point to it, will whisper in your ear that there was something unrevealed in the story of that crime. The general belief is that Alexander was murdered by the aristocrats as the price of that treaty of liberty. Next there are the rooms prepared for the heir of Alexander III., which were never occupied.

Memories of the Emperor Paul, too, who was strangled, are vividly perpetuated in the Romanoff Gallery. The daughters of Paul were noted for their beauty. One section of the gallery is devoted

to portraits of Paul's children. Catherine II. is depicted on horseback in regimental dress as she came to the throne. There is another unique portrait of Catherine II. Her face is painted as reflected in a large mirror. Places of honour are given to Catherine I., wife of Peter the Great, and the great Sophia, sister of Peter the Great, who raised a regiment against him. In Apollo's Hall every battle of note in Russian history seems to have been commemorated.

The State rooms are known by the distinctive style and colour of their decoration. There is the Yellow Hall, with doors of tortoise-shell. There is the Arab Hall, with Arab sentries when the Tsar is in residence. There is the Round Hall, where Ministers of State are received by the Emperor. Jordan's Entrance Hall, where foreign potentates arrive, is decorated in the Moorish style, entirely in gold, with mosaic floor. The chandeliers of pure crystal are of colossal size. The ball-room buffet is in white and gold with parquet floor. The ball-room itself is in Grecian style, and is known as the Hall of St. George. This hall contains the throne of Catherine II. The theatre is a study in white, blue, and red marble.

One of the picture galleries is devoted to the heroes of 1812, when Napoleon came to Russia. Alexander I. is represented by a life-size portrait on horseback. Alongside are fine oil paintings of the

Austrian Emperor and the Prussian King, who with Alexander went to Paris for the signing of the Treaty.

The Hall of the Coats of Arms represents all the district governments in the Empire. Therein is displayed a wonderful collection of dishes which have been presented to successive Emperors. It is the custom in Russia when the Emperor visits any district to present him with bread and salt as an evidence of welcome. The bread and salt are always handed to him on a gold or silver dish. Hence Tsars accumulate costly dishes in much the same way that a colonial governor accumulates trowels and illuminated addresses.

The Hall of Field Marshals is devoted to paintings depicting military campaigns in which Russia has been involved, such as the war of 1848, in which Russia went to the aid of Austria in subduing Hungary when Hungary was fighting for religious freedom. But for Russia's intervention Austria would have been beaten. Other campaigns commemorated in oils are the rising of the Poles in 1831 and the war with Turkey in 1877. The Franco-Russian *entente* of 1893 is commemorated by a magnificent statue presented by the French nation to the Emperor Nicholas. The Shipka Gallery further commemorates the 1877 campaign. What are known as the Battle Rooms are entirely occupied with pictures illustrating Napoleon's efforts to

conquer Russia. The Regimental Banner Rooms are eloquent of all that is pathetic and heroic in the militant history of the Empire.

In the Chapel Royal, where the present Emperor was married, service is conducted daily. It is otherwise noted for its alleged relics, the chief of which are a hand of John the Baptist and another of Andrew, a piece of the original Cross from Calvary, and a painting by Luke the Disciple. The verger in charge of these precious relics discourses eloquently upon them to visitors ; but his own honest opinion as to their authenticity may be gathered from a remark which he made in my hearing. Every member of our party was a heretic, judged by the standards of the Greek and Roman Churches, and therefore sceptical of relics. Some of our number asked for further information in regard to them, but the verger was not to be caught. "If you don't believe me, I can't prove it to you," was the candid admission.

The Emperor's Palace at Moscow, within the walls of the famous Kremlin, takes one back much further in Russian history. It is mainly a museum of antiquities illustrating the wealth and the glory of the Empire. As at the Winter Palace, each room has its distinctive style of architecture and decoration. The Alexander Room, after Alexander Nevsky, is wholly decorated with gold. To me the most interesting object in this room was an oil



ROOM AND BED IN THE ROYAL PALACE, MOSCOW  
Where Napoleon slept for two nights in 1812.



CORONATION DINING ROOM  
Used only once by each Emperor.



painting depicting Alexis in the act of refusing to become a Roman Catholic. There is, indeed, an historical series of pictures relating to Alexander, including such subjects as his fight with the Swedes and his return from his coronation. The Andreas Room, where the highest Russian decoration of Andreas is conferred, is also in gold, but relieved with blue tapestry. The reception chairs of the present Emperor and his lady find temporary accommodation here. After the former's death they will be sent to the Treasury. The Catherine Room, which is only used for conferring the decoration of the Order of Catherine on ladies, is notable for its malachite columns, otherwise the decorations are in gold, with red and blue tapestry. The Drawing Room for Ministers is rich in white marble and gold, with the walls tapestried in gold, silver, and green. A bedroom reserved for foreign Crown Princes represents an even more elaborate scheme in blue, white, and red marble and gold. The real Pompeian columns in the adjoining bathroom cost 1,000,000 roubles (£100,000). The Vladimir Room, which constitutes a reception room for Russian merchants, is decorated with white and pink marble and gold.

The old Ecclesiastical Tribunal from the thirteenth century remains intact. Near by is the historical Dining Room, where each Tsar has partaken of only one dinner—the one immediately after



his coronation. The Emperor and Empress eat under a canopy, and only Royal guests are present. Here the frescoes all illustrate Bible incidents. The carpet, all handwork, was made in the Moscow convents.

In the older part of the Palace are the Chapel of the Twelve Apostles, and the apartments occupied in the sixteenth century by Michael and Alexis. The Dining Room was built in the thirteenth century, and was occupied by Napoleon in 1812. Except for some of the floors which have had to be renewed, and the mica in the book-cases, which has been replaced by glass, everything remains as it was in the beginning. The bedroom where Napoleon slept for two nights, and which was also used by Michael and Alexis, has a small private chapel attached. The bed-curtains still hanging were a present to Michael from the then Emperor of China.

The Military Room of St. George and the Dragon is decorated wholly in white, with marble tablets on the walls giving the names of soldiers (and their regiments) who have received the Cross of St. George for bravery. Judging by the long list, running into hundreds of names, every officer in the Russian Army since the decoration was introduced must have been a brave man and have worn this cross.



## CHAPTER X

### MOSCOW AND ITS ANCIENT TREASURES

THE Kremlin at Moscow is one of the historic sights. Outwardly it is noted for its seven towers. It is enclosed by a high wall and skirted by the river. From either of the towers a fine view is afforded of Sparrow Hill, whence Napoleon got his first view of Moscow, and saw that it was in flames. Moscow, and particularly the Kremlin, is eloquent of Napoleon.

The Kremlin towers date from the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. Apart from the Emperor's Palace and the Treasury, the Kremlin is mainly a group of churches, each unique in historic interest and significance. The Church of the Annunciation was built in the fifteenth century, and was used chiefly by Ivan the Terrible. Subsequently it was used for Royal weddings, but it has now lost that distinction. Michael, Peter the Great, and Ivan were each married there.

When Napoleon reached Moscow he stabled his horses in this church, and the fact is remembered against him to this day. The Russian nation has long since forgiven his wild dream of conquest, but

they never have, and never will, forgive him for that act of sacrilege. In this church there is a magnificent ikon. It was presented by the Dom Cossacks in the thirteenth century. It was stolen by Napoleon, but the Cossacks recovered and restored it. Pictures of the Madonna hang here, too, in solid gold and silver frames, and all day long women are to be seen kissing these pictures. The jasper floor was given by the Shah of Persia to Michael, the first Romanoff. In the wall is the Throne Seat used by Ivan the Terrible when he came to worship. The frescoes are all Byzantine. The walls are covered with pictures of saints, and are objects of special reverence from Russian women. There is, further, a picture of the Annunciation in pure silver.

The Church of St. Michael is notable as the burying-place of all the Russian Royal families up to the seventeenth century. It is crowded with tombs and monuments. The parents of Ivan the Terrible are buried here. In a chamber apart is the tomb of Ivan and his sons. There is an elaborate open tomb to Demetry, brother-in-law of Ivan, a boy of twelve years of age, who was killed by another brother-in-law. He was canonised. Here also are the tombs of Peter II., son of Peter the Great, and the latter's two brothers, John, who reigned before Peter the Great, and Feodore, who reigned with Peter the Great.

The Church of the Assumption has been used

since the fifteenth century as the Tsar's Coronation Church. It was built by the Patriarch Peter, and all the Emperors from John III. were crowned there. It contains the tombs of the Twelve Patriarchs. The most interesting object of all, however, is the Patriarch's Chair. It is the oldest throne in Russia, and was brought from Kiev, the oldest city, in the twelfth century. It was used by Vladimir, the first Tsar, a Mahomedan, who became a Christian, and is popularly known as Vladimir's Chair. The entrance gate to the altar in this church is of solid gold. Individual pictures of the Twelve Apostles cover the wall on either side of the altar, along with a representation of the Annunciation in silver and gold, with the heads worked in diamonds and pearls. On the other side is a picture of the Madonna, alleged to have been painted by St. Luke. It is known as the Ikon of Vladimir, and is said to be worth a million roubles. It is a blaze of diamonds, pearls, sapphires, and rubies.

The famous bell tower (Ivan's Tower) was built in the fifteenth century by Boris Godounov, son-in-law of Ivan. It contains forty-five bells, of all sizes, but only half are now used. The big bell of Moscow—in its time the largest in the world—received its death crack some years ago, and now stands on the ground outside the tower with a large piece knocked out of it. One other feature of special interest is the collection of 875 cannon from

"1812." They were taken from the French, Austrians, Germans, and Spaniards. Close at hand is the monument showing where the Grand Duke Sergius was killed in 1905.

There are four entrance gates to the Kremlin—viz. the Gate Nicolai, the Holy Gate, Trinity Gate, and Boravitzki Gate. The last-named was the gate by which Napoleon entered in 1812. Entering or leaving by the Holy Gate, every Russian reverently uncovers his head.

Being little better than a barbarian in the matter of pictures, I hesitate to refer to the Trètiakoff Gallery in Moscow, except to say that it impressed me more than any other gallery that I saw in Europe ; and, after all, the value of a picture to most people other than collectors is the impression it makes on one. It was a relief to get away from the nude. A story told me on my travels concerning two Quakers from Pennsylvania voices my own sentiment. They had visited most of the European galleries, and came at last to Madrid. They had scarcely begun their tour of inspection when William called out impatiently, " John, I'm sick to death of naked women ; and not beautiful women, either. I'm going out." He suited the action to the word, and John went too.

The Trètiakoff Gallery includes a wonderful variety of pictures, representing in the main, of course, the best examples of Russian painters, of

whom Trètiakoff is chief. The Makobsky pictures make a striking collection. Kronnby is represented by his pictures of Salome bearing the head of John the Baptist on a charger, "Christ in the Wilderness," and "Christ in Gethsemane." Rooschoff's "Christ before Pilate," "Judas' Betrayal," and "The Jews in the Temple," are arresting pictures, as is also Sovrakoff's picture portraying the departure of a noble woman exiled to Siberia, and a companion study by Répine, "The Return from Exile."

"The Procession of the Holy Ikon" depicts an everyday scene in Moscow. The most celebrated ikon in Moscow is that known as the Iberian Madonna. It is an object of peculiar veneration, and has been for many years. It is recorded that when Napoleon was about to enter Moscow, as long ago as 1812, the people besought the ecclesiastical authorities to take the Madonna and lead them out armed with hatchets against the infidel hosts. When the Tsar visits the ancient capital, I was informed, he usually drives straight from the station to the church where this ikon is kept and pays his devotion. Every member of the Orthodox faith, when passing the church, uncovers his head and makes the sign of the cross. It is considered to be very lucky to have this ikon under one's own roof, and miraculous powers are attributed to its presence. Accordingly, every morning the ikon is taken through the city in a closed carriage drawn by four horses and driven by a bare-

headed coachman. I had the opportunity of witnessing this strange procession. My attention was drawn to it by seeing the people along the street stop and cross themselves as the carriage passed. In every house visited the ikon is carried through all the rooms, and a brief ceremonial service is gone through. It is a common sight to see the servants prostrating themselves in the hall or doorway when the ikon comes or goes, so that it may be carried over them.

Of course it is all a matter of roubles. For the privilege of a visit from the Iberian Madonna a substantial sum of money has to be paid, and only the well-to-do can afford it. It is one of the devices for repleting the exchequer of the Metropolitan, and a large annual revenue is by this means assured. To prevent any loss of cash at the church during the absence of the ikon on its daily tour the priests hit on a clever expedient. A copy of the ikon was made to take the temporary place of the original. In this way the devotions of the faithful and the flow of cash into the Bishop's treasury are not allowed to suffer interruption.

The most realistic picture in the Trètiakoff Gallery is undoubtedly Répine's portrayal of Ivan the Terrible's repentance and remorse after the murder of his son. It is indeed awful. Is there any other so terrible in its suggestiveness in all the European galleries? It is strictly in accord with the facts of

the crime. In a fit of madness Ivan killed his boy. Remorse swiftly followed, and he is shown pressing the lad to his heart with one hand while with the other he is seeking to staunch the blood as it pours forth from the temple. A characteristic example of Trëtiakoff's art is "The Baptism of Vladimir" in the twelfth century. Vasnetzoff's "After the Battle" (War with the Tartars) (thirteenth century) portrays the shocking realism of war. A battlefield is strewn with corpses, and only the vultures are left in possession. Equally symbolical of the horrors of war is "The Pyramid of Skulls" (Verestchagin).

Ivanoff is represented by three notable pictures, "Crucifixion," "Joseph of Arimathea Waiting for the Body of Jesus," and "Mary and John." One of the most charming studies is the portrait of the beautiful Grand Duchess Sergius, whose husband was assassinated in 1905. The Grand Duchess, who is a sister of the present Empress, is now Mother Superior of an Orthodox Greek convent, built at her personal cost.

The Treasury building houses one vast collection of ancient treasures associated with the personal and political history of the Tsars. There is a curious collection of helmets, illustrating the changing fashions in that style of headgear, including the helmet of Alexander Nevsky from the twelfth century, and the helmet of Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the Great, from the seventeenth century. There are examples

of the armour suits used by the Poles in the twelfth century, arms and accoutrements from the Roman (sixteenth century) period, the helmets worn by the first and second Romanoffs. Arms taken from the French in 1812 are preserved here, together with Napoleon's map of Russia. Russian war axes of the sixteenth century and the old flags of empire from the fifteenth century and later cover large spaces on the walls. Glass cases keep the dust from the collection of field-m Marshals' batons.

A saddle, sword, and accoutrements presented to Catherine the Great by the Sultan of Turkey find a place of honour, and another saddle given to Catherine by Abdul Hamid. Alexander I. is represented by a collection of fighting instruments and accoutrements. Interesting among a collection of chairs are : one taken by Peter the Great from Charles XII. of Sweden in the seventeenth century, the chairs used by the Emperor Nicolai and Empress at the reception following their coronation, and the reception chairs of Alexander II., Alexander III., and Elizabeth Petrovna. Nicolai's family treasures include watches, portraits, and locks of his children's hair.

There are crowns galore. Among the oldest and the most unique is Vladimir's, from the twelfth century. There is the crown of John III. and the first Romanoff crown, globe, and sceptre—all, by the way, made in Germany. The crown of Peter the Great is surmounted by a cross, and an immense ruby in its



natural state. The crown worn by Catherine, Elizabeth, and Anna is likewise surmounted by the largest known ruby in Russia. The coronation dresses worn in the sixteenth century are preserved in all their magnificence and glitter, as also the coronation robes worn by Catherine and Elizabeth, Alexander I., Nicholas I., and their Empresses, together with those of the present Tsar and Empress, and the Dowager Empress.

Then there are the thrones first used in the fifteenth century and still used. Both are in the Byzantine style, and were made in Constantinople. A coronation chair of Alexis, and used at the latest coronation by the Dowager Empress, was made in India, and is distinctly Oriental. The double silver throne used by Peter the Great and his brother was made in Hamburg. The coronation flags of successive Emperors have their historic interest. One large annexe is devoted to the European presents to successive Tsars in earlier centuries of Russian history. These are all of silver. That the Russians fed out of big plates in the twelfth century, at least, is shown by the unique specimens of silver vessels from that period. Among more modern royal presents are Napoleon's gift of Sèvres ware to Alexander I. and the coronation gift of an immense eagle in ivory from the Japanese Government to the present Tsar. The eagle stands 6 ft. high and its pinions measure about 4 ft. 6 in. across.

The collection of royal carriages is quaintly suggestive of the slow and cumbersome past. The first carriage made in Russia, in the fifteenth century, for the father of Michael is still preserved, as also the coronation carriage of Elizabeth (made in Germany), and the sleigh sleeping-car in which she travelled from St. Petersburg for her coronation. Her coronation car was made in Paris in 1754 and was the gift of Count Razoumovsky. Carriages used by Peter the Great, and an English car made for Boris Godounov, remind one of the gilded State coach of the Lord Mayors of London.

The bed and boots of Peter the Great are preserved as precious relics. The boots Peter made himself. The rough beds used by Napoleon and his aide-de-camp in Moscow in 1812 are equally valued as historic treasures ; and perhaps not less the cradle of Alexander I. and his camp-bed, boots, and shoes.

When a Tsar ascends the throne he has to line up like a police or military recruit, so that his height, chest measurement, etc., may be officially recorded. This record is preserved at the Treasury, and the identical diagram is publicly exhibited.

## CHAPTER XI

### SHOPPING IN RUSSIA

SHOPPING in Russia is a luxury. From the English or Australian standpoint everything is dear. Hence, while the well-to-do live in affluence, and spend small fortunes in dress, the poor have to be satisfied with meagre and primitive clothes.

St. Petersburg is a cosmopolitan city, where the fashions of Paris, Berlin, and London govern supply and demand. One has to go into the heart of Russia to shop in typical Russian fashion.

It is at Moscow that one's dreams are realised. But even there it is necessary to know your way about, or you will be keenly disappointed. Russian merchants do not display their choicest goods in shop windows. The best establishments—those which represent all that is unique and characteristic of the country—have no windows in the shopping sense. They are not shops; they are stores.

The day of emporiums and universal providers has not yet arrived in Russia. It is only at the koustari establishments that a wide range of articles is exposed under the one roof. The stranger would pass these stores unheeding, or mistake the building

for some artistic private residence. The ordinary shops—and there are plenty of them—offer nothing but disappointment to the expectant stranger. In them Australian or English ladies would find little or nothing to tempt or fascinate. To experience the full charm and seduction of shopping in Russia one must visit the stores. There one may revel in such delights as no other country in the world can offer. These stores are never crowded. Customers are not pressed to buy. To see is to buy, and it takes a long purse to stand the strain of the temptations which beguile at every turn.

Koustari indicates in Russia the small rural household manufacturer. The exact origin of the word is unknown. Some, on account of the similarity with the Russian word "koust," which means bush, interpret the word in an allegorical sense, the small industry being, as they say, like a bush compared with the large manufacture, which is a tree. Others say the word "koustar" (plural, "koustari") is derived from the German word "künstler" (artist), and was adopted into the Russian language, with many other German words, in the time of Peter the Great.

All the work in this industry is what may be termed home-made. That is to say, it is made by members of the family in peasant communities, without any hired help, and supplements the ordinary income derived from agriculture. The industry, which

is beginning to supply the markets of the world, had its origin in the manufacture of garments, crockery, tools, and ornaments for home use, and to provide amusement and useful occupation during the long winters. Gradually families came to exchange the articles so made with neighbours, and then with consumers in the towns, and thus the industry developed. When the intermediary dealer came on the scene, he stimulated the industry by creating new centres, distributing the raw material to the peasants, and lending the necessary money to start workshops.

To-day this koustari industry is one of considerable importance in the general economy of the Russian Empire. In no other country can one find so large a number of small household manufactories as in Russia. Their number is estimated at 7,500,000. The value of their products is said to total a billion and a half roubles, by which the peasants benefit to the extent of £1,600,000 annually.

The territorial distribution of this industry has mainly been influenced by economic conditions and natural supplies. Basket-making, for instance, developed in the village of Bogorods-Koie, district of Gorbatovok, owing to the existence in that locality of the bootmaking and saddlery industry, which needed a large quantity of baskets for packing purposes. The purchase of an agricultural machine by a peasant of Elabouga was the starting-point of the manufacture of similar machines by the peasants in that district.

An immense variety of articles is represented by the koustari peasant industry. Dress and boots are supplied to the Russian army and navy and railway. These products are to be found not simply in the homes of the common people, but in the Imperial palaces and the luxurious hotels for which the chief cities of the empire are famous. The roughest and crudest kinds of products are turned out in great quantities, as well as the finest and most artistic examples of the peasants' skill. The output of fancy objects for the drawing-room, artistic work in carved and gilt wood and mosaic, is surprising to those who are brought face to face with the industry for the first time. The koustar manufactures writing-desks, pocket-books, albums, furniture, bird-cages from 6d. up to £4 apiece, pottery, earthenware, porcelain-ware, majolica and mosaic ware, stone articles, glass table services, ikons (religious pictures), knives from 1d. to £2 each, rifles from 4s. to £320 each, clocks, watches, lamps, chiselled goods, textile articles, embroideries, enamels, papier-maché articles painted with exquisite taste and of fine workmanship, to say nothing of leather goods and furs.

The beautiful Russian laces have a ready market in Paris and New York. As for Russian furs, they represent the last word in luxury and affluence. A beautiful sable was pressed upon me by an enterprising dealer in what is known as the Sunday market in Moscow. I was told it was the one place in Russia

where bargains could be picked up. Scenting a bargain, I asked the lowest price for this modest sable. Only 135 guineas was named, but as it was the end of the season, and the new supplies would soon be forward, this price was reduced to 125 guineas as a special concession. I said I would take six, on the usual terms granted at land sales in Australia—viz. 10 per cent. down and the balance spread over as many years; but neither the dealer nor the guide professed to understand me, so, as the auctioneers say, there was no sale.

Among the many branches of the koustari industry, the wooden one is the most important. Immense forests furnish the necessary material. The peasants' households, as well as their farms, utilise enormous quantities of woodenware, as the quantity of iron articles used by them is very small. The manufacture of wooden spoons and wooden jars alone keeps thousands of peasant families busy. This will be better understood when it is mentioned that 15,000,000 wooden spoons are sold yearly in Russia. They are decorated and painted by hand with primitive designs, and are sold to intermediaries at from 1d. to 6d. for ten. The jars are used in banks and shops for silver and copper coin.

The toy industry centres around Moscow, Nijni-Novgorod, and Vladimir. Russian toys chiefly consist of paste-board, special mastic, wood, or metal. Ordinarily they are roughly made, very cheap, and

within reach of the poorest. Beyond these are the more expensive toys of artistic and ingenious design, and for the most part reproducing old Russian styles, or reflecting the popular phantasy and characteristics. Among these the most conspicuous are fantastic birds, bears, troikas, gorgeously dressed boyards, spinning women, boxes with jack-straws, representing all the objects of a peasant's home, and nests of boxes fitting one inside the other, and shaped to represent peasant types of men and women (*matrioschka*) or reproducing scenes in popular Russian fairy tales.

The textile industry includes creations, useful and artistic, in flax, cotton, wool, silk, and hemp. Usually most primitive weaving frames are employed by the *koustari*; but they produce articles in no way inferior, but often superior, in quality to those made in factories. The felt industry has reached a high degree of perfection. Many millions of pairs of felt boots are sold annually.

The lace and embroidery industry occupies many hands. The annual output of the Russian lace industry is estimated at £3,200,000. The implements used in this industry are very simple and inexpensive, consisting of a round cushion, spindle, and pins. Russian lace is made of white or unbleached thread, of white, blue or red cotton thread, as well as of white, black, or pink silk. The lace is manufactured by the yard, and also in the form of neckerchiefs, mantles, and entire dresses. They are often of very



delicate workmanship and beautiful in design. They repeat ancient traditional designs, permeated by the poetical influence of centuries of peaceful work, accomplished under the sound of melancholy melodies by the faint light of a resin burner. It has taken centuries to elaborate these simple Russian designs, and numberless generations to reproduce them. A tradition, a sort of custom, was born as immutable as the customs of the family and their religion.

One of the largest branches of the koustari industry is religious paintings, principally connected with the districts of Vladimir and Kursk, where the yearly output amounts to 2,000,000 ikons painted on wooden boards, according to unchanging standards, by peasant men and women. These pious pictures are seldom entirely painted by the same artist. They usually pass through many hands. Some paint the background, others the faces, others the hands, and others the garments, inscriptions or ornaments, and so on.

The artistic movement which, at the end of the last century, found its expression in England, and regenerated the industrial art of Europe, did not remain unnoticed in Russia. The desire to embellish the daily life, to render more beautiful the surrounding objects, the romantic aspiration towards naive forms and designs, and at the same time the need to educate and develop the artistic taste of the people, revived in Russian industrial art the national style.

The artists who worked with the object of giving a national direction to the industry of the koustari were led also by more utilitarian purposes, by the desire to facilitate the sale of products the workmanship and rudimentary forms of which, notwithstanding their cheapness, could only with difficulty withstand the competition of the great industry. A whole galaxy of painters consecrated their efforts to give a new life to the artistic tradition of the koustari production.

The best specimens of Russia's early industrial art, ancient ornaments, Nature studies, popular legends, and fairy tales, provided inexhaustible motives. Some follow the ancient ornamentation, others only get their inspiration from it, and introduce a modern note in the forms, designs, and colouring of the ancients. Certain details surprise one by their unexpectedness, their picturesque simplicity, their audacious originality. One recognises in them a special beauty, antiquated, fairy-like, Slavonic to a degree, yet ever ingenious, not to say "barbaric" and intimate.

As yet, the products of this industry are sold abroad as articles de luxe, but a larger and wider field of remuneration is rapidly being cultivated.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE SCHOOLMASTER IN EUROPE

THE past decade has seen remarkable changes in Europe as affecting the prestige and power of the Roman Catholic Church. That she is rapidly losing her hold and influence not only in Italy, Spain, Portugal, and France, but in every other country on the Continent, is patent to the most casual traveller. I asked a gentleman whose special business it is to travel all over south-eastern Europe—who knows that part of Europe like a book, and comes into close contact with the people actively associated with the away-from-Rome movements—what were the primary causes of Rome's declining influence. Here is his testimony in his own words :—

“ It is due, first of all, to the modernist movement all over Europe, and further, to the coming of the schoolmaster, the popularising of scientific education, and the opening up of educational centres. All these things tend to break the power of Rome. The Vatican authorities are continually issuing futile encyclicals against modern education, and are placing upon the Index scientific books commonly read by an ordinary English grammar school boy. The

natural result is that the forbidden fruit becomes more desirable and luscious to those who wish to taste.

“The most marked results are to be seen in Austria, where, as the outcome of the *Los Von Rome* movement scores of priests have left the Roman Catholic Church and gone into secular occupations. So strong has this movement become that there is now actually a union or society of ex-priests founded for mutual help and inspiration.

“Rome is making a desperate effort to get a foothold in the Balkan Peninsula, and at great expense—a lavish expenditure of money—has established schools and churches in Montenegro and parts of Macedonia; but up to the present her hold upon the country has been practically nil. In Hungary she is losing ground rapidly. Kossuth, in Hungary, like Mazzini in Italy, taught the people that the road to political freedom was barred by clerical intolerance. Clericalism has always been the enemy of the people. Kossuth’s watchword was, ‘Clericalism is the enemy.’ The successful issue of the revolution opened the way for Protestant propaganda, with the result that all over Hungary strong and flourishing Protestant churches have been founded.

“Spain, in her revolt against Rome, is passing through what Hungary experienced fifty years ago. In the very heart of Roman Catholicism, Rome has lost her hold upon the people. Apart from one or

two well-defined districts, Italy is now one of the least Roman Catholic countries in Europe.

“ Even in Bohemia, Norbert Capek is able to get open-air meetings, and is patiently listened to while he exposes the universal meaning of Romanism. He edits a weekly paper with a circulation of 30,000 copies, and its pages are devoted entirely to an exposition of Protestant principles and an exposure of the hollowness of Roman pretensions. We can confidently look to the time when Bohemia will once again return to the faith of John Huss, the martyr saint of Prague.

“ The significant feature of the movement in Prague is that the city council have at last sanctioned the placing of a medallion portrait of John Huss on the front of the building where the great Protestant lived and laboured. In thirty years there have been brought into the Baptist churches of Hungary alone over 30,000 members, and the number is increasing at the rate of over 2,500 a year. The present treasurer of the Baptist Union of Hungary was seven years ago a Roman Catholic priest. Some of the denomination's finest workers and preachers are converts from Roman Catholicism.

“ Three years ago, in Genoa, the bishops and priests of the city attempted to hold a procession of the Annunciation. They had only proceeded a few yards from the church dedicated to the Virgin Mary when the citizens seized the crucifixes, the Host, the

banners, and all the panoply of a Roman Catholic procession, dashed them to the ground, and drove the processionists back into the church. That would have been impossible ten years ago. It may be a small circumstance, but it denotes the modern tendency to break away from Rome.

“From careful inquiries which I have made throughout the whole of south-eastern Europe, I have learned that the attendance of men at Roman Catholic services is less than 10 per cent. of the entire congregation. With the increase of education and the decrease of Roman Catholic schools, this tendency will become more marked. It is a revolt against priestcraft by people whose eyes have been opened. No modern political reformer in any country in Europe has remained loyal to the Roman Catholic Church. He has clearly seen that religious and political liberty must go hand in hand, and in some instances he has discovered that the progress of political liberty depends upon the obstruction of Papal supremacy. Even where men have desired to remain loyal to the Church, the retrograde edicts issued from the Vatican have compelled them to withdraw.

“In Europe we are on the threshold of a second but greater and purer Reformation. In this reformation the prime workers and outstanding leaders will be men of the Protestant faith. For thirty years they have been quietly working until at last they

have become a force to be reckoned with. The pioneers are still with us, men whose imprisonment and social ostracism, the loss of goods and of houses, have been but a spur to greater and nobler effort. They have in their hearts a passionate love for Jesus Christ and an intense desire for the salvation of their fellow men. One of the foremost leaders of the Baptist movement in Italy is a young man, an ex-priest, who is wielding an immense influence in industrial centres. The Baptist brethren are everywhere being federated into a world alliance that they may stand by the brethren in Europe and elsewhere, and give them every support and encouragement in the great work in which they are engaged."

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE LAND OF THE INQUISITION

SPAIN is a land of strange contrasts. It is one of the most beautiful countries in the world ; yet it is a land of darkness, superstition, and sluggish development, and its glories belong to the past rather than the present. To the casual observer the life of the Spanish people appears to be hopelessly barren and unfruitful of anything that is good or ennobling ; but a more intimate acquaintance discloses the fact that with all their faults they are a kindly disposed and lovable race, and that their national trait is hospitality. In estimating the national character, however, one has to distinguish between the north and the south, for the two are scarcely comparable. In the north the people are as thrifty and industrious as in the south they are improvident and indolent. Everything is more or less primitive in the way of cultivation ; but in the north the fields are everywhere pictures of industry, while farther south brown arid plains are the rule rather than the exception.

Crossing the frontier from France the traveller experiences none of those annoyances from military or police officers with regard to passports that are



so trying to patience and temper in Russia. I was advised to take every precaution in the matter, and carried in my pocket papers which represented all the security and protection which the British Government had the right to ask on my behalf ; but during the month that I spent in Spain I was not asked once to produce my passport. This was all the more remarkable considering the unsettled state of the country, produced by the riots at Barcelona, which had scarcely had time to die down.

There were disabilities, but they belonged to the order of red tape. Immediately on passing the turnstile from the French to the Spanish side of the railway station at Irun, for instance, I was made aware of the fact that nowhere outside of the Tsar's territory are the movements of the people more foolishly entangled with Government tape than in the home of the Inquisition. I had booked through second class from London to Madrid, but on presenting my ticket at Irun I was peremptorily forbidden to pass the turnstile. It took eight or nine officials to impress on me that something was wrong with my ticket, and their concerted jabbering was worse than anything that could have been experienced when the Tower of Babel was a-building. I could not speak a word of their language, and a small collection of books telling travellers what to say in Spanish and how to say it failed to give any comfort or enlightenment. Books of this class, like Bible com-

mentaries, never by any chance tell a man what he wants to know.

I was in a fix. The train for Madrid was due to start. Had I known it, that was the last thing I need have worried about. Trains in Spain do not start by the clock, but when the engine-driver and the guard, and perchance the station-master, have finished their cigars! Apparently they must have only just started their "smoke," for it was fully two hours after the scheduled time that this particular train puffed out of the station. And I was not on board!

A French lady saved the situation for me, or I might yet have been exchanging compliments with the excited, jabbering officials. It seems that I had been guilty of a grave offence. Mine was a second-class ticket of the "ordinary" kind; but as there were no "ordinary" trains that day connecting Irun with Madrid, freight had been raised, and I was not to be allowed to pass the turnstile until I had paid the equivalent of another fourteen shillings in English silver. Having solved that little difficulty I naturally wanted to catch the outgoing train. But there were other difficulties. Again the inexorable arm of the law interposed. Why, I could not understand. A second excited altercation ensued, the odds being against me. Six oratorical Spanish wrestlers to one faltering and half-frightened Kangaroo! Neither side knew what the other was talking about.

This time a German, who somewhat rashly professed to be able to speak English, came to the rescue, though it took him a long time to unravel the mystery and nearly as long again to make me understand his English. The official explanation given through this obliging gentleman turned my wrath into laughter, and I immediately withdrew all my imprecations of the major and minor Spanish railway officials. I told the German that the Spanish wit was something hereafter to swear by, and that it was worth travelling from Australia to get one's humour sharpened on such a grindstone. He professed to understand my meaning, but took it so solemnly that I was certain he had failed to share the joke. Indeed, before we parted company I had secured ample confirmation of a theory which had begun to take shape in Russia—i.e. that it is much easier to understand a man who talks to you in an unknown tongue than to try to understand the foreigner who essays the rôle of sympathetic interpreter. It is the most painfully pathetic and potent illustration that could be offered to justify the dictum that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

Will it be believed in any civilised country outside of Europe that the reason why I was not allowed to travel by that outgoing train for Madrid, while holding a second class ticket on which raised freights had been levied, was that there were no second class carriages on the train? Anxious to reach Madrid,

I airily waived my privileges aside and asked to be allowed to travel third class. They were horrified. Since the world began was it ever heard in Spain that any man possessed of a second class ticket was anxious to travel third class. "Then may I pay the difference and travel first class?" That was an equally impossible proposition, and I was forced to capitulate and wait four hours longer for a seat in a second class carriage!

However, it was my first sight of Spain, and there was much to interest one even at a frontier station. The Spanish railway official is the most easy-going person to be met with in Europe, which is saying much. His nonchalance is something to conjure with. Time, tides, trains, and trams are proverbially said not to wait for any man; but the proverb does not hold in Spain. For the Spanish railway official all these things have to wait. And the official in gold braid is neither better nor worse than the meanest subordinate. The "tired feeling" is chronic in Spain—even the railway engines refuse to be hustled.

It was a novel sight that on the railway platform at Irun every official, whether station-master, policeman, military officer, soldier, porter, ganger, cabman, was smoking a cigar. The only persons to be seen smoking the humbler cigarette—and I took particular note—were the long-suffering people who were providing the officials with their cigars—viz. the travelling public.

Everybody smokes in Spain, but nobody smokes a pipe. Except for a casual traveller, I never saw a pipe being smoked in Spain or exhibited in the tobacconists' shops. The rule applies largely throughout Europe. In Russia everybody smokes cigarettes. I had purchased a fairly roomy calabash pipe at Colombo. This, with some Australian "plug" tobacco, evoked more interest and gained for me more friends than anything else. When travelling from Madrid to Escorial these innocent articles inspired quite an impromptu levee among the passengers, at which I did the honours. There was a party of professional guides on board, bound, like myself, for Escorial. At first I had a third class corridor compartment to myself, and was smoking the pipe of peace in the hope, at the first analysis, that it would prove a necessary disinfectant. Spaniards are conspicuously restless and curious when travelling, and leave no part of a train unexplored.

It was not long before one of the guides found me out. I should not have noticed his intrusion but for his courteous salutation, without which no Spaniard comes into another's presence, be he stranger or friend. In a moment or two he was away again; but he quickly returned, and in his train came several other guides. Between them they filled up the vacant seats in front and on either side of me, and from each came the customary salutation. Glancing up a little later I saw by the expression on

their faces that something was amusing them. As I looked at each in turn and exchanged smiles, one of them pointed to my pipe and said something at which they all laughed. I held it toward the guide nearest to me for inspection, and it was passed round as gingerly as a cocked revolver.

The climax was reached when I pulled out a plug of "Welcome Nugget" and began to cut up another pipeful and light it. Before I had got properly going each of the guides had departed; but only to circulate the news, and before Escorial was reached every man and woman on that train had come to have a look at the foreigner and his pipe and examine the strange tobacco. But that was not enough for the guides. Their curiosity had not been satisfied. They wanted to sample the plug tobacco, and I cut them each off a pipeful. One of them immediately rolled his in a cigarette paper and tried to smoke it, but could make nothing of it. When I had explained that it was only pipe tobacco, each lovingly folded his sample in paper and stored it away, presumably as a keepsake or as an exhibit for some museum. Had I been so minded that bit of tobacco would have commanded the services of either or all of those guides free of charge during my stay in Escorial.

## CHAPTER XIV

### CONCERNING BANDITS AND POLITICIANS

As a boy the cut-throat bandit, the prevailing type of Spaniard in books of adventure, appealed to my imagination. But I had no desire to meet any of these gentlemen in the flesh on their native heath, and being, like John Gilpin, on pleasure bent, I had no such expectations. Long before we were across the Pyrenees, however, I got a shock which thrilled me more than any bandit story I had ever read. It was a clear, moonlight night, and the mountains were capped with snow. There was nobody in the compartment I occupied, so about midnight I got up and took a stroll through the corridor train. There was not a soul besides myself in the second-class part of the train. At first there was the thought of something being amiss. Then, as I remembered the "raised freights" and the tips at Irun, there came the reflection that after all life had its compensations, and that having the train all to myself was assuredly the correct thing, seeing that by all the laws of justice I had paid for it!

But my loneliness was transient. At Medini the train filled up, and into the carriage came five as

ruffianly-looking fellows as I ever want to meet in the middle of the night in a strange mountainous country. The men looked like bandits of the most approved type—or so, under the circumstances, they appeared to me. They were certainly dressed like bandits, or what my boyhood's reading had always pictured as bandits. These men might have stepped out of a story-book or a theatrical poster. They wore the conventional cloak, held so as to cover every part of the face but the eyes, and huge sombrero hats. Worse still, on the platform, pacing up and down in the moonlight, were dozens of similarly dressed men. I confess to having been scared, and there was nobody to ask what it meant, or so I concluded in my sudden apprehension. Judge of my surprise, then, as the train started, to receive a polite salutation from each of my companions as he cast aside his cloak, and, on my responding, to be asked by one of them, "English, Señor?" They were typical Spaniards from the country on their way to Madrid, and, through that one of their number who could speak English tolerably, made the rest of the journey for me delightful. How they did laugh, first at myself and then at themselves, when I told them I had suspected they were bandits.

As we journeyed on I noticed on every station platform these flitting, heavily cloaked, and muffled men. It was the same in Madrid, whether in the daytime or at night. Curiosity led me to make inquiries



as to the reason for this strange national habit. I learned that the one great fear in Spain is of pneumonia. Everybody lives in dread of it; and as Spaniards have not yet learned to breathe through their nostrils, every Spaniard covers up his face with his cloak in uncanny fashion whenever he goes out of doors if the weather is at all cold or windy, as a precaution against swallowing the dreaded germ.

Politics in Spain are still very much an unknown quantity. If there is a country in the world where the people would be justified in appropriating the discarded verse of the English National Anthem, and singing with heart and voice, "Confound their politics, frustrate their knavish tricks," that country is Spain. Election methods in Spain, I was assured, put even those of Tammany in the shade. Liberals and Conservatives alike are charged with being equally unscrupulous. Some of the methods employed were explained. The first step in an election is to appoint new governors in all the provinces, and these receive express orders to secure the triumph of the Government candidates at all costs. The Governor accordingly sends for the mayor and village magistrates, and tells them direct that the Government considers it necessary in its own interest that such and such a one should be elected. The mayors need no further instructions. If they dare to act contrary to the Lord Pontius (as the common people designate the Governor), they know that, justly or unjustly, they

may expect a lawsuit regarding their municipal accounts, and that a heavy fine will assuredly follow. Nominally there is universal suffrage in Spain, but even in Madrid the electors' lists are tampered with; and to a still greater extent in the villages, where whole piles of voting papers are secretly thrown into the ballot-box by the presiding official.

At the time of a recent election my informant had to present a petition to a newly-appointed Governor, because a mayor acting contrary to the law had prohibited religious assemblies of more than ten persons. The Governor's decision was entirely in his favour, as, in his opinion, not only Protestants (whom he also looked upon as Christians—a very important concession from a Spaniard), but Jews and Mohammedans were entitled to complete freedom of religion. On the other hand, the Governor requested my friend not to enforce his rights too strongly at that critical juncture, for there were two bishops in his province whose support was absolutely necessary to him, as he had been commissioned to gain the election at all costs. "I told him frankly," said my friend, "that it was of no interest to me to put hindrances in the way of his policy, but that I should be obliged to have recourse to the Press if any of our co-religionists should be taken prisoner—a thing by no means impossible." "In such a case," answered the Governor, "I myself would intervene, for under no circumstances could I allow that to be done. Leave

the matter in my hands and I will speak to the magistrate." And the man kept his word.

Some weeks later this same official sent for an influential mayor who belonged to the opposite party. The mayor excused himself on the ground that he was ill and unable to travel. After a week the Governor inquired whether he had recovered. The answer was in the affirmative, but that he had no money for the journey. Thereupon the Governor ordered the captain of the Guardia Civil to conduct him on foot to the capital. As the place was more than forty miles distant, the poor mayor arrived at the Government buildings in a rather exhausted condition. His superior allowed him to rest awhile, and then greeted him with a most friendly smile. He made inquiries concerning the state of the municipal budget, and then told him that the Government considered his influence to be of great importance in the elections. The mayor, being just then in a very meek frame of mind, promised all that was required of him. Nevertheless, when the elections came on he supported the candidate of the opposite party, an action that the Governor did not fail to remember.

Although in the elections this particular Governor did not hesitate to bring any kind of pressure to bear on his subordinates, he was generally regarded as a good official, being incorruptible and relentless in attacking intemperance and gambling. While many Governors obtain large profits by allowing gambling

hells, despite the heavy tax on them, he imposed such large fines on the players that in the whole province "not even a rat dared play," as a critic expressed it. About this time a professional player from a neighbouring province came and commenced his business in an inn in the town of the mayor just referred to who had failed the Governor. During the gambling a murder took place, but the Governor was not informed of it till two days after. He did not fail to take advantage of his opportunity, and with keen delight imposed a fine of 500 francs on the mayor for allowing gambling in his district. He exacted an equally high penalty from the owner of the tavern, and also from the lieutenant of the gendarmerie for delay in giving notice.

A Governor possesses absolute power in his province, and mayors, as this gentleman learned, do well not to incur his anger.

## CHAPTER XV

### ESCORIAL AND THE DEVIL OF THE SOUTH

FOUR miles or so outside Madrid, high up and surrounded by snow-capped mountains, is the famed monastery of Escorial, said to be the largest building of its kind, and, with the exception of the Egyptian Pyramids, the largest heap of granite in the world. Spaniards refer to it with pride as the eighth wonder of the globe. Its interest for me lay in the fact that it was built by the Monster of the Inquisition. Philip II. is said to have ordered its construction in fulfilment of a vow to thus commemorate the Battle of St. Quentin, though history does not record which side won, and it is alleged that both armies ran for their lives. On an historic occasion, when the French Ambassador in Spain was taken to see this monastery, he shrugged his shoulders and pertinently remarked, "What a big fear must the king have had who made such a vow!"

Fact, fiction, or tradition apart, however, Escorial commands admiration. It was built in the days when Mexico and Peru emptied their treasures into the lap of Spain, and it represents enormous wealth. It was placed under the charge of the Order of St.

Jerome, and at one time housed no fewer than 400 monks ; but to-day the Augustinian monks—Luther's order—are in possession. The enormous pile of buildings occupies a vast quadrangle, divided by numerous interior courts, which, with towers at the four corners and the lofty church at one side, are allowed to give it the shape of a gridiron, the instrument of St. Lawrence's martyrdom. Indeed, this emblem of the gridiron confronts one at every turn, whether on the walls, the doors, the windows, and even on the altars and vestments in the church.

This church, called the Temple, is undeniably beautiful. Its façade is adorned with colossal statues of six of the Kings of Judah who took part in the construction or re-dedication of the Temple at Jerusalem. On each side of the high altar of majestic marble are oratories of black marble, intended for the use of royalty, and above them are kneeling effigies of Charles V. and Philip II., and several members of their families. There are more than forty minor altars, all richly adorned with picture and sculpture.

The statue of St. Lawrence is of huge proportions. The trunk and limbs came from Rome, but he has a new modern head, and by his side is the gridiron on which St. Lawrence is said to have been roasted. Tradition tells that when St. Lawrence had been on the grill for some time he observed to his tormentors,

“Turn me to the other side, for I think this side is sufficiently roasted.”

Philip II. is credited with asking the Pope of that period for the bones of St. Lawrence to be sent to Escorial ; but the Pope replied that it was impossible, as all the ten men who had been employed to dig him up had died. From this fact he concluded that there was evidently an objection on the Saint's part to have his bones shifted. The gridiron was, however, sent along to Philip, and still rests beside the statue of St. Lawrence at Escorial, in a highly gilded state.

Up in the monastery choir I sat in the seat where Philip received the news of the victory of Lepanto. The seat, which is similarly constructed to the choir stalls, commands an uninterrupted view of the high altar perhaps 300 feet away. The choir stalls are cunningly devised, and fitted with seats which allow the priests to rest while they appear to be standing through the long recitals of Mass.

Another striking feature at Escorial is Benvenuto Cellini's colossal statue of Christ, which was lost for a time but was mentioned by Goethe as having been last seen in Escorial. Erected on a balcony, it overlooks the great court of the monastery where the soldiers of Spain stood during the celebration of Mass before proceeding on their mission to subdue the Protestants in Holland. On each flagstone in the court, it is recorded, stood a soldier, who from his

position could plainly see the statue of Christ behind the improvised altar.

In the Palace apartments of Charles III. and his successors are preserved wonderful tapestries reproducing paintings by Goyen, Teniers, Rubens, and Wouvermans. In the salon of the Halberdiers are frescoes giving a panoramic representation of the Spaniards in their conquest of Granada. Queen Isabella, says the legend, made a vow that she would not change her shirt until Granada had been taken, and she wore that shirt for eighteen months ! Whether legend speaks truly or not, it is a fact that to this day creamy horses in Spain are called "Isabellas."

Philip II., called by the Hollanders "The Devil of the South," died, like Herod, eaten by worms, "a death," as the aged Fliedner once remarked, "reserved by God for the persecutors of His people."

Visitors to Escorial may still see the chair in which Philip was carried about during his last days. He died in a vestry adjoining the church, the door of which looks directly on to the high altar. In his last moments this fiend of the Inquisition implored the priests, whose fanatical servant he had willingly been, to tell him what he could do should he be condemned at the bar of God, as in his life he had done all they had asked of him. On this he rested his chances for mercy in the next world ; but



evidently suffering from qualms of conscience in the presence of death, he exclaimed to these priestly advisers who haunted his bed, "I throw the responsibility of it all upon you. I ask you to tell me if there is anything wanting yet for my salvation, and I protest before God that it is your own responsibility if I have left anything undone, for I am prepared to do it all."

Then he asked for the relics, of which he had brought 365 to Escorial, one for every day in the year. They brought the principal ones—three priests—and each bore a relic. One brought the knee and a bone of the holy San Bastian, with a piece of skin still attached to it. Another brought a relic of St. Alban. The third brought a bone of the arm of St. Vincente Ferrer. These they put on Philip's knee, hoping he would get better. Then, when the Church had done all it could, says the biographer, with a withering sense of irony, Philip resigned himself to the doctors.

Philip was suffering from gout, then from fever, which resulted in ulcers and sores, and in these the worms bred. The bed was packed with relics on either side of the body; but neither relics nor doctors could save him. It was a fearful ending for a man who had vowed that should his son become a heretic he himself would bring the wood to burn him.

The library of Escorial is famous for its priceless

manuscripts and unique collection of Arabic works, though some thousands of volumes were stolen in the time of Napoleon, when the whole collection was removed to Madrid and narrowly escaped being carried off to Paris. There are books of rare worth and beauty, more particularly the missals and prayer-books of kings in the thirteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. These are hand-painted and hand-printed in gold throughout. There is a copy of the Four Gospels in gold lettering, prepared by direction of Conrado II. and Enrique III., and dated 1039.

The wall at one end of the library is occupied with a fine painting of the Heronimede Friar, Gose de Siquenza, the librarian at the time of the Inquisition, and the man who originally arranged the whole collection. Though a Roman Catholic, he was ultimately condemned to the dungeons because he "knew too much." Before sentence he wrote out his defence, and the original manuscript is now in the library of Halle University. How it came there is a mystery.

On the library walls also hang several paintings of Charles V. of Germany and Charles I. of Spain, who said in scorn of Martin Luther, "This monk, he shall not convert me!" Charles was the father of Philip II.

I was fortunate in having Pastor Fliedner with me at Escorial as guide and interpreter. He re-

counted a good story with himself as the "plot," which well illustrates the spirit of Rome. Four or five years ago the uncle of the Kaiser was visiting Escorial, and after inspecting the treasures of the library signed his name in a specially prepared album, as did the members of his suite. Pastor Fliedner, being a German, was with the Royal party by invitation, and he also signed the book. Of course, Pastor Fliedner is a heretic in the eyes of the Roman hierarchy in Madrid, and when later they discovered his name in the album the page of signatures was promptly torn out and the book sent to Madrid for the Grand Duke to sign afresh!

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE INDULGENT AND THE INDULGED

ROME is a most indulgent mother to her children, but it is always for a consideration. In Spain, through all the centuries she has inculcated a system of morals which has produced a lower standard of morality than is to be found anywhere else in Europe, though in Italy it is bad enough in all conscience. Rome's code of morals in actual practice, whatever it may profess to be in theory, amounts to this—anything is lawful provided the Church makes something out of it.

It is the universal testimony of Protestant evangelists and pastors that the chief difficulties in their work of evangelising Spain are the indifference of the people to religion and the low moral standard taught by Rome and ingrained in the life of the people.

I asked a well-known citizen in Madrid whether the traffic in indulgences still went on in Spain, and he assured me that Rome reaped a rich harvest from this bartering of morals. I asked him where these indulgences were to be obtained, and he took me to an ecclesiastical book dépôt. Here I had

the choice of as many indulgences as there are sins in the decalogue. My friend read them over to me in English, and I selected three. They cost me about nine shillings in English money. One offered all the rewards and blessings of the crusades without the trouble and expense of harnessing up a fiery Arab steed, or clothing myself in a suit of mail. Another allows meat to be eaten on fast days for a period which I am afraid has now nearly expired. A third is an indulgence against stealing, and was the most expensive of the three. Under Rome's code of ethics in Spain stealing is no moral crime if you are armed with an indulgence—that is to say, if the Church is allowed to share the spoil. The indulgence I purchased gives me immunity against moral consequences so long as the theft does not exceed 700 pesetas, or their value. Beyond that a further indulgence, a more expensive one, is necessary. People in England or Australia or America will scarcely credit that such an unholy traffic as this can be in operation. Yet in Spain it is as natural and common for a Roman Catholic to seek to avoid the consequences of a breach of the moral law by purchasing an indulgence from the Church as it is to buy a ticket when he is going on a railway journey.

Talking on this subject with the head of a large educational institution in Madrid, he observed: “Let me show you how this indulgence business

affects the life and character of the people. Here is a case within my own knowledge. It is typical of what is going on every day :

" A little girl from our school went to confession last week. Among the questions put to her by the priest was—

" ' Did you eat any meat at the last fast day ? ' "

" ' Yes, Padre.' "

" ' That is very bad. Don't you know that it is a great sin ? ' "

" ' Well, Padre,' pleaded the child, ' you know my father does not take any account of religion. He eats meat on fast days. We have to eat what he eats, or go without food.' "

" ' Still, it is a very great sin you have committed, and you must get an indulgence.' "

" ' But I have no money, Padre ; we are very poor.' "

" ' Don't you ever go to market ? ' "

" ' Oh, yes, Padre.' "

" ' Well, it is easy when you go to market to buy for your mother to keep back at one time five centimes, and at another ten centimes until you have enough to buy the indulgence.' "

And so the child is taught to commit a real sin in order to condone a fictitious one.

I was told at first hand of an architect who had been attending Protestant services and reading the Bible. One day he went to the priest for advice

as to lending out his money at usury. It is a common practice in Spain, and is connived at by the priest, because he shares in the plunder. He is usually the third person, the obliging friend who introduces the borrower to the lender, and claims a commission from both.

In this instance the reading of the Bible had quickened the architect's conscience. He had talked the matter over with his wife, and they had agreed that in future lending operations they would ask a lower rate of interest.

In the meantime he determined to explain matters to the priest, and seek his advice. "Do you lend your money on purpose to get this high rate of interest, and for the sake of making money?" asked the priest; "or do you do it because you have a wife and family to think of and want to bring them up well and educate them?"

Of course the architect pleaded guilty to the softer impeachment.

"Oh, then," responded the casuist, "you are justified in demanding the high rate of interest."

The incident further illustrates the standard of morality inculcated by the priests. But in everything their ultimate object is to make their victims contribute to the Church exchequer.

## CHAPTER XVII

### CHECKMATING A NUNCIO

IT is not only in Russia that one can never take anything for granted, especially if he be a heretic and engaged in Protestant propaganda work. The iron hand of Rome is over everything in Spain, and it has been the priests rather than the politicians who have barred the way to liberty and progress. One of the evangelical pioneers in Spain was Pastor Fritz Fliedner, who founded the missionary college at Madrid, and also the Jesus Church, as the building in Calle Calatrava is called. The difficulties which he encountered constitute one of the most thrilling chapters in the history of Protestant evangelism in the Land of the Toreador.

Three of his sons are bravely holding the fort and extending the work in various parts of Spain. From one of them I learned the story of how the missionary college came to be built. It is almost a duplication of Pastor Fetler's experiences in St. Petersburg, only the one is ancient and the other modern history, and to an Englishman it reads like comic opera.

Plans were drawn for a building estimated to



cost £12,000. Having obtained permission to build, after a year's patient waiting the work was started. Immediately a police officer came along and prohibited the building. Pastor Fliedner went to the Lord Mayor, who said: "It looks as if you were building a church." "No," explained Mr. Fliedner, "it is a college." "But you have there a steeple in the plan." "Oh, that innocent little tower is only an architectural ornament." "But you have a bell also." "Quite true, but you see we have a big clock there and the bell above it. But if you object to the bell, I shall take it away and lower the tower by so much, and then, perhaps, you will permit the building." "We shall see; bring the next plan."

The next plan was brought, and that again had to be examined by the municipal architect. This person fell ill, and for a fortnight Mr. Fliedner visited his house every day inquiring for his precious health. At last he recovered, and the plan was approved. "But," interposed the Lord Mayor, "we must first finish the side street." "How long will that take?" "Oh, only four or five days." But it lasted seven long months, and Mr. Fliedner went daily to and fro to the Government offices, to the Town Hall, to the Notary, and to the Ministry to try to push matters forward. It was all in vain, as is every effort in Spain to accelerate speed in civic matters. Then the

Liberal Ministry fell, and the Conservatives came into power.

"Now only God can help," thought Mr. Fliedner, as he sought for an audience with the Prime Minister. Canovas was very kind, but explained: "It would cause us the greatest trouble to let you build such a house with a steeple and a bell; the ladies of the aristocracy would at once overwhelm us with their visits. It is impossible."

"Mr. President," was the answer, "you have known me for years; therefore you are aware that I never tried to make outward show. I got this plan just as it is from Germany, but I am willing to take away the bell, as I have already consented to do, and besides I shall take away whatever you desire, for my only object is to have a big school." "It is true that we have always got on well together," remarked the Prime Minister, "but you will have to take away something more." "I shall take away whatever you like, Mr. President," responded the obliging pastor.

Next the new Lord Mayor had to be won over.

"If I have my way," said he, "you will never get permission, because this thing goes against the sentiments of the nation."

Eight days later the Lord Mayor's permission was given, provided the small tower of the building, the bell, and the clock were removed. This was agreed to, but scarcely had the workmen com-

menced to dig for the foundations than another police officer came and ordered a cessation. But this time the workmen declared, as they had been advised, that they would not cease unless compelled by force to do so, as the Prime Minister had given consent.

The officer first went and ascertained that the Prime Minister had actually given permission, and then he went and informed those who had sent him to hinder the erection of the college, viz., the Archbishop of Madrid and the Nuncio of the Pope, Monsignor Cretoni. When they heard that Mr. Fliedner had got the permission, they were furious. They telegraphed to Rome. The Cardinal Secretary, Rampolla, wrote in the name of the Pope to the Queen Cristina of Spain, that she might hinder the building.

When Monsignor Cretoni brought her this letter, she sent him to the Prime Minister. Canovas said : " Mr. Fliedner has got the passion of gathering orphan children ; now his home having become too small, he builds a new one. Certainly we cannot hinder that."

" Oh, I would not care for it in any other country ; but here in Spain it is different, and the building looks so ecclesiastical."

" Oh, no," said the president of the Ministry ; " we have obliged him to take away from the plan the bell and the steeple, and even the clock."

"But there remains still the Gothic window in the top of the front," persisted the Nuncio.

While this storm was raging, Mr. Fliedner was absent from Madrid on a pastoral conference in Lisbon, hoping to go from there to England. His wife had told him: "God will let you find at the right time a vessel, because it will do you good to have some days' rest on the sea."

"The kindness of God did not let me find a vessel. I had to come back to Madrid, where a message was awaiting me to come directly to the Prime Minister. He received me very kindly.

" 'I am sorry to trouble you once more. But I did not know that there existed really a conspiracy that you should not build. But I will not have this; I have put my foot through it. And, really, I cannot require more of you; you have taken away all that I asked you for, and you are entirely within the lines of the Constitution. Only, as you have said that you were willing to take away whatever I liked, I have mentioned this in order to show that you are a peaceable man; and then the Nuncio said: "Then let him take away the Gothic window." Now I cannot request that of you; I ask it only as a favour.' "

"Mr. President," said Mr. Fliedner, "you fulfil your promise in helping me to build my school; I will fulfil mine, and take away whatever you like, changing that Gothic window."

"I am very thankful for it," he said; and then he continued: "Now the building terminates in a round. They say it is like the choir of a church. It is not, I am aware; but it is round."

By this time Mr. Fliedner had become so tired over these petty annoyances that he broke out: "Then I make it square." But scarcely had he uttered the words than he realised how that would destroy the architecture of the building, so he quickly added: "No, that is impossible, but perhaps we can make it an octagon."

"All right, make it an octagon," said the Prime Minister, "and as you have yielded now even more than you were obliged to, you shall be sure that you shall not be hindered a single day." And thus both the Pope and his Nuncio were checkmated.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE LAW OF COMPARISON

SPAIN, like Russia, is moving toward the consummation of religious liberty. Politically, the country at the time of my visit in December, 1910, was quiet, and everywhere the opinion was expressed that the advent of a more liberal régime had removed the grievances which gave the Republican party their war-cry. A peaceable national sentiment is, however, asserting itself in favour of complete religious liberty, believing that permanent harmony and progress for the country lie in that direction.

It is by the law of comparison that one best realises how far Spain has really travelled along this pathway since the notorious days of the Inquisition. In 1855 Francisco de Paula Ruet, the first convert to Protestant Christianity in Spain, was sentenced by the then Bishop of Barcelona to be burned alive. The Bishop, however, had no power to enforce his verdict ; but Paula Ruet was subsequently tried for preaching in the civil courts, and sentenced to banishment for life. He received the sentence smilingly, whereupon the judge

sternly demanded to know what there was to laugh at.

“Is it a light thing to be banished for life?”

“No, Señor,” said Paula Ruet; “but one never knows. Life is sometimes a long time, and your Government may not last, and then I shall come back.”

Within thirteen years Queen Isabella had herself been banished, and Paula Ruet was back again, openly preaching in Madrid.

The latest phase of the spirit of religious liberty which is abroad had been initiated by the young men of Spain a few months before I reached Madrid. Meetings had been held all over the country in favour of a petition to Parliament, praying for the extension of liberty in the matter of religion and education, and the secularisation of the cemeteries. These meetings were in most cases very largely attended, as may be gathered from the fact that no fewer than 150,000 signatures had been secured for the petition. None but Spaniards were permitted to sign. As this document promises to be of historic importance, I give the full, literal, and somewhat picturesque translation:—

“Address which the lovers of religious liberty present to the National Parliament,—To the Cortes.

“Those who subscribe are Spanish citizens living in different parts of the Peninsula, in full

use of their civil and religious rights, respectful as it corresponds to men under discipline of the moral obligation, obedient to civil power, and loving sincerely constitutional government, the glory of contemporary Spain. We have the honour to address the Spanish Cortes with all the respect that merits the high national representation, the clamour of whose patriotic voices is inspired by unquenchable love for the culture and progress of the nation.

“The most interesting pages of our history are, in the modest opinion of the petitioners, those in which is evident respect and mutual tolerance in the sphere of religious thought, a respect and tolerance demonstrated in the living together of races of very distinct confessions.

“The religious idea is a sanctuary which the hand of man ought not to touch, and historic evidence proclaims that after the violation of religious conscience invariably has followed the glorification of a martyr or the moral decapitation of the people.

“The encounter of the ideas is followed by an increasing fervour, to make them valuable by research and study, which are signs of culture and announce general harmony. To renovate oneself is to live, and in endless renovation the nations will have to live which do not resign themselves to being simply spectators of the most noble of battles.



Their bloodless strife is for the reign of love, which is peace and well being.

“ The petitioners leave to the illuminated and elevated judgment of the worthier representatives in the Cortes the transcendental attainment of a measure which surely would put our beloved Fatherland on the same religious level as live to-day the nations which have proclaimed religious liberty as a fundamental dogma of modern democracy.

“ An immense campaign recently carried on in the principal capitals of the kingdom has demonstrated to the organising evangelical committee the lively sympathies felt by the Spanish people for all those measures tending to facilitate the free exercise of conscience, and whose practical expression comprehends the neutrality of the State in the matter of religion and education, and in the secularisation of cemeteries.

“ Those who sign in the first instance, evangelical Spaniards, residing in this capital, have the honour to submit to you the adjoined sheets containing more than 100,000 signatures (actually over 150,000) not only of their fellow-Protestants, but of many other fellow-countrymen who, without having the same religious ideas, join them and feel with them the primary need of the exercise of the spirit of complete and entire liberty.

“ Well worthy of the Fatherland would the Liberal Parliament be if to the most noble desire

of religious liberation, represented in this popular petition, its worthy representatives would answer by consummating in the fundamental laws of the kingdom complete religious liberty, or by abolishing at least those dispositions in force which are opposed to so holy a principle.

“Which grace your petitioners expect to obtain through the upright procedure of your highnesses, for whom we desire continued legal life for the welfare of the Fatherland, and the direction of the Almighty in the exercise of your sovereignty.”

The first eight signatures are those of Bishop Juan B. Cabrera, of the Spanish Reformed Church; President Cipriano Tornos Blasco, of the Spanish Evangelical Church; Francisco Oviedo Jauregui, Fernando Cabrera y Latorre, Adolfo Araujo, Jose Martianez, Enrique Vega y Naon, and C. Araujo Garcia.

The full significance of this petition lies in the fact that there are only about 12,000 declared Protestants in Spain. I had the opportunity of inspecting the petition at the *dépôt* of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Madrid, where it awaited the pleasure of Parliament for its presentation. It comprised four bulky volumes, as large as an encyclopædia, handsomely bound in scarlet, with illuminated title-pages, and enclosed in a cabinet of polished wood.

Here, again, history makes its own interesting

comparison. The Bible Society's building, which temporarily housed this petition, was formerly the residence of one of the judges of the Inquisition. About a stone's throw away is a building which latterly housed the British Embassy, but which was originally the residence of the chief judge of the Inquisition. All the other buildings adjacent were associated with the Inquisition, as the residential quarters of judges and officers, and they are to this day connected by underground tunnels. The Bible depôt faces the street along which most of the victims of the Inquisition passed to trial and torture, and close by is the Plaza Mayor, the scene of the diabolical *auto-de-fé*.

Thus, more by accident perhaps than design, this petition, which expressed the latest movement for religious liberty in Spain, was presented to Parliament from a spot sacred to the memory of the martyrs of the Inquisition.

In the light of such testimony, can it be doubted that Spain is moving ?

Six months before my visit a further instalment of religious liberty had been granted through an edict which gave religious bodies, other than Roman Catholic, permission to affix their names to the front of their church or meeting place on the payment of a certain tax. This tax is a municipal one, for in Spain, as in most, if not all, European countries, no opportunity of raising

revenue is allowed to pass by the municipal authorities.

This concession would appear to be a very small thing to people cradled in the liberty of the Anglo-Saxon world, but in Spain it meant much more than the mere right to affix a name to a building used for religious purposes. It meant the special State recognition of Protestants, and their right to worship according to their own faith and practice. It was further the removal of a ban which had made it very difficult for Protestant missionaries to make any headway in the matter of evangelistic work among Spaniards. Secret discipleship is no longer imperative, and the effect generally of the edict has been to put heart into the work of both missionaries and people.

One incident connected with the granting of this new measure of liberty is worth recording. One of the most popular missionaries in Spain is the Rev. Jan Uhr, of Valencia. He is a Swede, and is supported by the Swedish Baptist Union. When his application to place the name of his church on the building, in accordance with the edict, came before the Municipal Council, a strong feeling was expressed that the permission should be granted, and that in recognition of Mr. Uhr's splendid work in the city, the tax should be remitted. On a vote, this course was adopted by 50 to 4, the four dissentients, needless to say, being Roman Catholics, and fervid



ENTRANCE TO THE REV. JAN UHR'S CHURCH,  
VALENCIA

Showing the name on the front of the building—a concession only recently granted.



supporters of the priest party. But the Council went further, and decided to subsidise Mr. Uhr's schools, and promised an increase of the amount during the succeeding year. This, I was given to understand, is the only Protestant school in all Spain which is subsidised by a municipal council, and probably Mr. Uhr's is also the only Protestant church which has been allowed to have its name painted over the front of the building without the payment of the municipal tax. It was a simple but eloquent tribute to the work of a good man.

I was greatly interested in Mr. Uhr's work. It was typical of the devotion and singleness of purpose which characterises the work of all the Protestant missionaries whom I met in Spain. His parish is a large one, and includes Valencia and six outlying villages. A village in Spain is often a place with a population of as many as 8,000 or 9,000 people. Mr. Uhr has two helpers, a Spaniard and a Swedish missionary. A serious obstacle in the work of evangelising Spain is the prohibition of open-air preaching and the difficulty of obtaining buildings suitable for Gospel services. Most of the preaching is done in hired buildings and secluded places, such as caves. A notable service was conducted by Mr. Uhr in a cave some miles from Valencia. A prayer-meeting followed with the set purpose of praying for the conversion of everyone present, and the whole thirteen confessed Christ. The Sunday before

I reached Valencia, Mr. Uhr baptised four Spanish converts in a village pool. The eldest was a woman 81 years of age. On the Sunday that I worshipped in Valencia at Mr. Uhr's church, a mother and her four grown-up sons—fine intelligent fellows—had tramped many miles to be present and arrange with the pastor for their baptism.

Along with the low moral standard of the people, as the result of centuries of priestcraft, is the difficulty of so few being able to read. As against this there is the instinctive kindness of the Spanish people, and their eagerness to be taught when once they have had their eyes opened to the simplicity and reality of a gospel that is without financial burden.

I met an earnest and attractive young Swiss in one of the great European banks in Valencia while making some inquiries which necessitated an interpreter. He spoke French, German, Italian, Spanish and English, and has served extended periods in each of the countries named to acquire the languages to qualify for the position of confidential clerk which he held. That is an illustration of the zeal which is possessing thousands of young men and women in Europe in their determination to get on in life. But in nothing was this young man so zealous as in his desire to extend the Kingdom of God in Spain.

One sentence of his set me thinking more than



any other I heard in Spain. It, moreover, revealed the Christian character of the man as nothing else could have done.

“ Yes,” he remarked, in answer to a question, “ I can speak seven languages fluently ; but I always pray in English.”

I asked him why, and this was his reply : “ The English language has brought me nearer to Jesus Christ, to the beauty of His name and character. There is no equivalent in Spanish or in my own language for the English word ‘ Saviour.’ In Spanish the nearest you can get to it is Señor ; but every man one meets in Spain is Señor. Christ is more to me than that, and I find it all in ‘ Saviour.’ ”

Valencia, it should be mentioned, is the most liberal of the provinces in Spain. “ Several large towns are open to us,” one missionary informed me, but we have not the means to enter in and take possession. Other provinces are very hard to enter. The people are greatly prejudiced, and will not, as yet, allow the Gospel to be preached by Protestant missionaries in their towns under any circumstances. Nevertheless, the dawn has come in some parts, and liberty is enjoyed as it never has been before. It is Rome which has to fear for the future in Spain, not Protestantism. Wherever I went I found Rome’s religious houses barred with iron. New convents, even in Madrid, are so constructed that

in case of another revolution and attack the inmates would have more than one way of escape. In a comparatively short time the steady pervading light of religious and political liberty will have changed the whole aspect of affairs in the land of the Inquisition.

## CHAPTER XIX

### PROTESTANT WORK IN SPAIN

THE Protestant community in Spain is reckoned to number from 12,000 to 15,000 souls. There are about two hundred places where services are held, but only a few of these are churches. There are about the same number of day schools. The Protestant forces are divided into various denominations. The Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Lutherans together form what is styled the Evangelical Church of Spain. This is largely Presbyterian in polity and doctrine. Then there is the Reformed Church of Spain under Bishop Juan B. Cabrera. That is Episcopal in its formation and professes to be an evangelical reproduction of the old Mozarabic Church of Spain. Then there are the Brethren, who are in very strong force; and perhaps the strongest evangelical district is the north-west of Spain, where the Brethren have been working, and largely because of their efforts. The Wesleyan Methodists, under their English Missionary Society, are found only in Catalonia and the Balearic Islands. The Baptists, who are working under the guidance and help of the Swedish

Baptist Union, are in Valencia and Catalonia. The Darbyites are also represented, and the Seventh Day Adventists, and a number of nondescript people, who work entirely on their own.

Then there are the Bible Society and the Religious Tract Society. Both these are in the fullest sympathy with all the denominations, and as far as possible work through them. In 1910 the Bible Society had a circulation in Spain alone of over 90,000 copies of the Scriptures. The Religious Tract Society circulated over 300,000 publications, but many of these went to Spanish South America.

In the matter of Protestant education, there are four colleges for secondary instruction—El Port Venir, conducted by the Brothers Fliedner, where boys are trained professionally; another at Puerta Santa Maria, a town near Cadiz, where young men are trained as evangelical schoolmasters and pastors; the International Institute in Madrid for Spanish young ladies, to prepare them for professional and commercial life; and the International College in Barcelona, also for Spanish young ladies. The latter is under the American Board of Foreign Missions. Both the last-named colleges are under the direction of Mr. Gulick, a Congregational minister, hailing from the United States.

The Bible Society has 35 colporteurs engaged in Spain in circulating the Scriptures. The chief difficulty in this work is the illiteracy of the people.

It has been calculated that 60 per cent. of the people in Spain can neither read nor write. Other difficulties to be contended with are the opposition of the Roman Catholic Church to the reading of the Scriptures and the very powerful social, industrial and economic influence of the Romanists. Under different forms the Roman priests control the railways and tramways, many of the banks, most of the factories and nunneries, and they have not hesitated to use their power to coerce and persecute. This fact explains why most of those attached to Protestant Christianity in Spain have been poor people; very few of them belong to the middle class or the rich.

There are three evangelical bookshops in Spain. One is in Madrid, and there are two in Barcelona; one carried on by the Fliedner Bros. and the other conducted by the Bible Society.

The tyranny of the Roman priest finds special play in persecuting the colporteurs of the Bible Society. This is scarcely to be wondered at when one realises first of all that Rome dreads the light of the Gospel, and further that the work of the colporteurs brings them into the closest relationship with the people. Mr. Summers, executive head of the Bible Society in Spain, told me the particulars of two severe instances of persecution of colporteurs, about which, at the time of my visit to Madrid, he was in correspondence with the Minister.

Spain is almost as bad as Russia in the matter of police registration and supervision. Every adult, male and female, has to be registered and provided with a "Cedula Personæ," or naturalisation paper. This must be always carried about and produced on demand of the police and, moreover, renewed every year. It is charged for according to your salary or income, or the amount of rent you pay, whichever is higher. Without it you cannot make or sign a contract, or obtain letters from the post in any town you may be visiting.

The colporteurs of the Bible Society have to carry these "Cedula Personæ" the same as other people. In addition they have to be provided with a licence, which costs about thirty shillings a year. In the cases of the colporteurs cited by Mr. Summers, these documents had been taken from them by the police magistrate. That is a serious matter, for without them the colporteur loses his identity and becomes an object of suspicion. In both instances the colporteurs, though they had broken no law and were regularly licensed, were robbed of their credentials and cast into prison. In the case of one, his books were confiscated and destroyed. After serving terms of imprisonment, they were released and expelled from the country, and a promise was forced from them that they would not return. In no case of persecution of this kind—and it is repeated year after year—has any redress been

given. It is the same in every country where Rome is the power behind the police and the Government—there never is any redress for any wrong or violence.

Rapidly as Spain has moved in recent years towards civil and religious liberty, the land is still dark with tyranny, persecution and superstition. But it is the darkness which immediately precedes the dawn. The discouragement, difficulties and hardships of those who seek to promote New Testament Christianity are many and severe; but there are encouragements, and these are the incentive to brave men and women to persevere. Among the encouragements is the growth of evangelical sentiment amongst the people as a whole, as a result chiefly of the wholesome work and influence of the Bible Society. Politically, too, the signs are favourable. A few months before my visit, the Prime Minister made a Royal decree, giving a more liberal interpretation to the Eleventh Article in the Constitution—that which specially relates to the question of religious liberty. Full religious liberty cannot be given in Spain without changing that Eleventh Article, and to do that a Parliament must be specially elected to do that specific work. That will follow, but the time is not yet ripe. The Prime Minister would not have done as much as he did successfully unless he had behind him the support, first of all of the King, and then of the

people. Undoubtedly one of the most powerful factors in liberalising and preparing the people of Spain for a full measure of religious liberty is the increasing circulation and reading of the Scriptures, and it is encouraging to find that the persistent efforts of the Bible Society are having that beneficent result.

Few men travel more in Spain or know the country better than Mr. Summers. It is his frequent experience to meet with professional men. On first discovering who he is, they generally work off on him a standard joke. "What," they say, "are you still pushing that old book?" But they always come to the serious point, and their universal advice and testimony is: "Go on with your good work; don't get tired; for what you are doing is, more than anything else, preserving what faith there is among Spaniards in God and His Word." These people are nominal Roman Catholics, and they recognise that Rome has no power to meet infidelity.

Unfortunately, the Republican Party is associated with Atheism, but in 1910, for the first time, when speaking at political meetings, their leaders affirmed: "The Spaniards must have a religion, for they are a religious people, but that religion must not be one of superstition and priestcraft. It must be based on the pure and simple teaching of Christ." The Republican Party is not



a powerful one, but its speakers have to be listened to.

Happily, the King is making himself popular, and with the present Prime Minister, who is a Liberal of pronounced tendencies, has, in the opinion of those who have closely studied the matter, saved the situation in Spain. While seeking to interpret the democratic ideals of the people, the Government is putting down with a firm hand all the seditious meetings of the Ultramontanes on the one side, and the Anarchists on the other. The Prime Minister has declared his determination to maintain the sovereignty of the State. Unfortunately, the Roman bishops sit in the Senate, and the fact explains why it is so hard to get the camel of liberty through the needle's eye.

Portugal now rejoices in complete religious liberty. Formerly she had a larger measure of liberty than Spain as regards the temper of the people, though less as regards law. To illustrate: A Protestant minister went to call on one of the Ministers of State to congratulate him on the declaration of the Republic and his elevation to office. When the Minister saw him coming, he got up and anticipated his visitor by congratulating him on being a Protestant and on the new religious liberty attained.

The outstanding drawback in Portugal is that common to more enlightened countries—the multi-

plication and overlapping of denominations. If union on a common evangelical basis is not possible in countries like Spain and Portugal, where the work has yet to be done, where is it possible? "Denominationalism in Portugal is a bane," said one prominent worker to me.

## CHAPTER XX

### ROME PAGAN AND ROME CHRISTIAN

ITALY, like France, Spain and Portugal, is sharing in the great religious awakening which is turning the thoughts and the hearts of her people towards the simpler forms and faith of Evangelical Christianity. Rome may be said to be divided into three sections—Ancient Rome, Modern Rome, and Vatican Rome. The latter is a thing apart—a relic of the ecclesiastical past. Another citizenship has arisen in modern Rome which knows not the Pope and owns no allegiance to him.

One of the first things shown to visitors within the Vatican territory is the door which was shut when the temporal power of the Pope was withdrawn. It has never since been opened. In the courtyard before one enters the Vatican buildings the attention is arrested by the presence of a sentry pacing up and down on the wall. That is another token which marks the severe limit imposed upon the Pope when Italy proclaimed her own sovereignty. It was the "thus far but no farther" mandate of a greater than Canute. The Vatican gardens run under that wall, and the Pope can never take his

morning walk without being reminded at sight of the sentry that in Italy, at least, his temporal power ends where the liberty of the Italian people begins—on the other side of that wall. Hence the term, “The Prisoner of the Vatican.”

When that door in St. Peter’s was closed, however, another door, “a great door and effectual,” was opened. The Evangelical Churches are bravely responding to the spiritual needs of modern Rome, though, as in the case of their Apostolic predecessor, they are beset by many adversaries, who would, if they could, close that effectual door.

Most of the Evangelical Churches are represented in Rome by consecrated leaders; but the time at my disposal only permitted me to investigate among mine own people.

The Baptist work in Rome includes four Sunday schools having a combined roll of about 350 children; two Sunday morning services in the city; afternoon preaching and Sunday school at four mission halls; English preaching at two churches; a united prayer-meeting on Monday night, at which the attendance ranges from 30 to 50; a sectional meeting and preaching in the mission rooms on Tuesdays and Thursdays; preaching in the two city churches on Wednesdays; two Bible study meetings, at which anybody is permitted to speak, on Fridays; and on Saturday evening one preaching service. Once a



REV. N. H. SHAW,  
Head of the Baptist Mission in Rome.



#### NEW CONVERTS

A Spanish woman and her four sons, who were baptised in the Protestant faith while the author was in Valencia.



month all the Evangelical Churches in Rome unitedly meet for prayer.

The Baptist work at San Benedetto, in the Abruzzi, is in a very flourishing state, though some time back it suffered fierce persecution at the hands of ecclesiastical Rome. A very unsatisfactory priest had been sent away, and an able and astute priest replaced him with instructions to oust the heretics. He began by urging the people to boycott the Baptists, who, in consequence, were openly insulted in the streets. They were prohibited from taking water from the only pure water supply in the district, and were prevented from buying bread. Matters reached such a pitch that the evangelist reported to headquarters that there was a serious danger of a massacre. The Rev. N. H. Shaw promptly passed the report on to the Government, who acted with energy. Troops were poured into the Abruzzi, and officers were sent to investigate. The Press also took the matter up, and, after searching inquiries, one correspondent declared that but for the calmness of the Baptists there would have been a second St. Bartholomew's Day. Arrests were made, and fourteen persons were condemned to various periods of imprisonment and fined. They appealed to the higher courts, but the sentences were confirmed.

Then the Government proceeded to prosecute the priest for inciting his people. The matter,

however, was deferred and finally quashed on the priest signing an undertaking not to continue in such a course.

Three years before my visit, Mr. Shaw received a deputation from a village called Paganico. It was headed by the archpriest, who had three churches in his care. He gave Mr. Shaw to understand that he had been reading the Bible, had been teaching his people according to the Bible, and having become an evangelical, the people had readily followed him. The result, of course, was a rupture with the Vatican, and so it came about that the deputation was sent to ask the Baptist minister to come and start evangelistic services. The deputation brought a document signed by 104 inhabitants, many of them heads of families.

Mr. Shaw had an extraordinary reception in a building styled the Town Hall, but which outside of Europe would be regarded as inferior to a stable. He preached to a crowd of villagers, sang a hymn to them, and induced them to repeat the Lord's Prayer. After several visits Mr. Shaw found the priest to be intelligent above the ordinary, and so sincere in his newly-found faith that he arranged for him to continue the services. Subsequently, Mr. Shaw baptised a score of them in the river, and with that number formed a church. At first a great deal of persecution was experienced, but the work progressed, and the latest information given



me by Mr. Shaw was to the effect that the people had bought land and were going to build a church. The archpriest has proved himself to be a diligent, earnest evangelist.

The Baptists have about forty centres within what may be termed the mission-district of Rome. At each they have adherents who are regularly visited by the evangelists. The mission staff comprises the Rev. N. H. Shaw, the Rev. E. S. Summers, M.A. (formerly a missionary at Serampore, India), who is in charge of the work at Via Urbana and Civita Vecchia ; four evangelists and several Bible-women, and four evangelists in the provinces.

Less than 50 years ago there were not any Baptists in Italy. Now there are over sixty churches and fourteen other houses of worship, a hundred out-stations, some fifty pastors, a number of evangelists, nearly two thousand members, about as many Sunday scholars, just over one hundred teachers, theological school, two newspapers, dispensaries, an orphanage, day schools, kindergartens, night schools, Bible-women, colporteurs. All the Baptist publishing work for Italy is done at Turin, under the direction of the Rev. W. Landels, who besides has charge of the work in the provinces of Liguria and Piedmont, and does the greater part of the Baptist Union work in Italy. The denominational paper is *Il Testimonie*. The other paper, *Il Seminatore*, is a paper specially conducted for the people on

social lines. It is published twice monthly and has a circulation of 10,000. When I visited the printing works the machines were busy producing a million tracts for distribution at the big exhibitions held last year (1911) in Rome and Turin.

Mr. Shaw has been labouring in Italy for over 30 years. After 15 years' work in Rome he was in charge of the work in Florence for 9 years. On the death of the Rev. W. Wall, he was asked to return to Rome and take up Mr. Wall's work. Mr. Wall's son succeeded him in the interesting work at Florence, where the Baptists have a nice church with about fifty members, a Sunday school and a branch work at Prato (Tuscany).

The American Baptists have one church in Rome, also a theological school, in which Mr. Shaw teaches homiletics. The Baptist Missionary Society has three out of nine students at the school preparing for the ministry. The American Baptists are specially engaged in Southern Italy, where they have several churches; though they have also undertaken work in the north. In the south their missionaries at first met with great persecution, which resulted in the military being called to their rescue; but even this adversity worked for their good, and latterly they have been much encouraged in their efforts. There are Baptist churches at Florence, Milan, Turin, Genoa and San Remo.

The work is exceedingly hard, not now because

of any open persecution, but on account of the inveterate indifference of the Italians to religion. That condition, I was everywhere assured, was largely due to the influence of the Papacy, which has fed the people with fables instead of truth.

The great work of the Protestant Churches is to try to arouse an interest in religion. Thirty years ago there was more excitement than there is to-day. The Gospel was more of a novelty to the Italian people, and everybody was more or less inclined to hear what the new evangelists had to tell them. Somehow they thought it had to do with politics, and as they gradually came to realise that the work was entirely spiritual in character, interest began to flag.

The Methodist Episcopalians have splendid churches in Rome, with a printing establishment, schools, and a high school for young ladies. The Wesleyans and Waldensians are also energetically represented. The Scottish Church and the English Episcopalian Churches are concerned wholly with the English-speaking population.

"As far as the religious atmosphere is concerned," remarked the Rev. N. H. Shaw, "it is much more favourable to us than formerly. People who will not have anything to do with us respect us, and we have always the respect of the law. We are not allowed to preach in the open air. It would

be worth a few broken heads if we were ; but the menace of the priest party is the danger."

Rents in Rome are five times as high as in London, and the cost of living has gone up over 30 per cent. in recent years. This has necessitated the Pope adding 25 per cent. to the salaries of the Vatican employees. The people crowd together in tenements. Many only occupy one room, and cannot invite a minister to their homes. In any case, visiting would arouse the suspicion and hostility of neighbours against those visited ; so that the Protestant ministers have to be very careful in this matter. In the main they have to rely on preaching services and tract distribution to reach the people.

The Modernist movement is growing, in spite of the Pope. Apparently suppressed, it still lives, and, as one heretic minister expressed it, "will break out again stronger than ever." The attitude of the Italian people toward the Papacy may be explained in this way : From the political point of view all Italy, with few exceptions, is opposed to the Papacy. When it comes to religion, you have the ignorant people who believe everything the priest tells them, and they are taught not to have anything to do with Protestants. The educated people of Italy, save those who have special interests in the Papacy, are without religion. A large number of the teachers in the universities are practically Pantheists or Atheists. They profess to have

grown away from religion. Pervading all classes there is more or less the spirit of religious indifference. The truth is the modern Italian cannot be enthusiastic about anything.

"The Papal influence is still great; but it is outside politics," was the testimony of one who should be an authority. There was a keen discussion in the Italian Parliament three years ago on the question of religious education, and the then Premier (Giolitti) cleverly relegated the matter to the municipal councils.

"Rome is wonderfully astute. If Protestants were only half as astute," sighed a Protestant pastor in my hearing in Rome. That sigh may be heard all round the world, for it describes the situation in England, in America, and in Australia, equally as in Europe. Roman astuteness is still carrying her triumphantly along, though twentieth century reason and conscience have relegated her to the dead, dark past to which she belongs. It is in Europe, undoubtedly, where they have known her best and longest, that Rome's triumph gives greatest promise of coming to an end.

## CHAPTER XXI

### IN THE SUSA VALLEY

IN 1894, in one of the villages in the Susa Valley named Meana, the people had quarrelled with the priest, who on the 19th of March (St. Joseph's Day) had refused to say Mass in St. Joseph's Chapel. The head of the village was so enraged that he said : " All right, my fine fellow ; if you won't say Mass we will get the Protestant minister." So he wrote to the Rev. W. Landels, of Turin, asking him if he would come and conduct an open-air service provided the special permission of the Mayor was obtained. Mr. Landels agreed.

At the railway station, on arrival, he was met by a number of musicians, so with banners flying they marched to Saretta. There were so many people that they could not all get into the public square, where it had been arranged to hold the service. Accordingly they adjourned to an open field, where Mr. Landels preached to 1,500 people on " the name that is above every name "—not about Joseph, but about his Son.

A work was started that day that has been going on ever since. First a Protestant church

was built; then the outlying districts were interested; and at the time Mr. Landels related the facts to me regular services were being conducted in nine centres in that valley, five churches had been organised, and the whole of the expenses, excepting the salaries of the two evangelists, are paid locally.

It was a disappointment to me, as well as to Mr. Landels, that the torrential rains which had been falling all over Europe for weeks prevented my making a mule journey into this historic country—sacred to the memory of the Waldensian heroes of the Cross—to inspect this promising work on the spot, and make the acquaintance of some of the noble men and women identified with it.

It requires the heart and soul of a hero to lead and inspire a work of this nature, for the physical as well as the spiritual difficulties are great in this Alpine valley. The record of a winter day's work will give some idea. On Sunday morning Mr. Landels (or his colleague, Mr. Shipley) starts off at 5.30, with his lantern, to walk for three hours over snow and ice, frequently in a blinding snowstorm, to the first station. After service the return journey has to be made to Meana, where service is held, followed by Sunday school, which brings him to 5 p.m., when he gets his first meal. Immediately after, a second start is made, under the same conditions, only in the dark, on a journey which occupies

nearly two hours, for the evening service. This lasts till 11 p.m. The walk home has then to be undertaken, and usually the evangelist arrives in a condition more dead than alive. On one occasion the evangelist slipped and dislocated his knee-joint. The situation was perilous; but having offered a prayer for help, he stood up as best he could on one leg, leaned against a rock, and began swinging his leg backwards and forwards until at last he heard a click which told him that the bone was back in its socket. Then he started to walk home, and on arrival had to lay up for a month.

At San Antonino, Mr. Landels was invited by the Mayor and three councillors to hold services. Their avowed idea was to oust the priest. He replied, "Yes, I can come and preach and teach, but, being a Baptist, I cannot baptise your children." Mr. Landels went and preached in the Market Place regularly until the weather became too severe, and a hall had to be secured. So eager were the people to hear that the services on Sunday began at 8 a.m. and continued till 11 o'clock next morning, the time being occupied with preaching, praying, Bible study, or singing practice. And then in the small hours of Monday morning the congregation would go with the preacher to the railway station to see him off before retiring to bed.

"When I get in the dumps," said Mr. Landels, "I buy a ticket to San Antonino, and take a seat



in the hall where I can watch the people's faces during the service ; and I come back a new man."

The people in the Susa Valley are positively puritanical in their religious observances, which is a rare thing in Italy. They take a solemn pledge against work on the Lord's Day. I was told of one man who had two fields, and the only time at his disposal for working them was on Sunday. After his conversion he applied to be baptised, and was accepted, but only on the condition that he gave up his Sunday work in the fields. He accepted the condition. The first convert was a young woman. She was in the habit of attending the dancing hall below the room wherein the services were held, and one afternoon after the dance she went upstairs to the service. She has never missed since. Her husband followed her example. Theirs is now referred to in the district as a perfectly model family.

The standard of sexual morality is very low throughout Italy. In other respects the Italian people are an example to most nations—even to England—especially in the matter of drinking. The comparative sobriety of the people in recent years is most marked.

I inquired the reason from Mr. Landels, and he attributed it largely to the cinematograph. Instead of visiting the drinking shops the people pay their twopence and go to the cinema.

It is scarcely surprising that the Italian standard of morality should be so deplorable, considering the example set by the priests as a class.

While I was in Italy the papers reported the presentation of a petition to the Pope from three thousand priests praying to be allowed to marry. Commenting on the circumstance, a Milan paper—not an anti-clerical paper by any means—presented the popular arguments against celibacy, and quoted the astounding assertion of a leading Jesuit that ninety-nine per cent. of the clergy in Italy fall into sexual sin every year. In keeping with that terrible indictment, I was reminded that St. Alfonso declares that a priest may commit sexual sin without committing mortal sin.

There is no pleasure in reciting such unsavoury facts as these; but they explain many of the difficulties which confront the Protestant missionaries in their work. What can be expected of the people when their religious teachers are so sunken in moral depravity?

## CHAPTER XXII

### A NATION WITHOUT GOD

WITH all its manifest advantages, France in many respects is the saddest spectacle among the nations in Europe. It is a nation without God. Officially, the French nation is trying the hopeless experiment of doing without God. The people have deliberately left Him out of their calculations, and are wholly given over to materialism and largely to atheism.

Evangelical Christian effort finds it difficult to make any impression on the people, and is represented by a comparatively feeble percentage of the population. The Reformed Church—whose members are descendants of the Huguenots—the Roman Catholics, the Jews, the Lutherans, and the Mohammedans were State established until the recent rupture between the State and State religions. Roughly speaking, there are about half a million nominal members of the Protestant Reformed Church, mainly in the south. The Lutherans come second in membership, followed by the Free Churches. The Congregationalists in France are more Presbyterian than Congregational in practice. The Baptists

and the Methodists stand in about equal proportion, the Baptists being slightly the stronger.

All the Baptist churches in France are supported by the American Baptist Missionary Society. There are about twenty-five Baptist churches, twenty-five pastors and evangelists, and 2,500 Church members. In Paris there are three Baptist churches and in the suburbs one, with a total of about 550 members.

The Brethren are fairly strong, but, as they do not publish any statistics, nobody can precisely estimate their strength.

It is recognised that Mr. Darby's translation of the Bible into French is one of the best.

Protestant effort in France has been much more vigorous since the official separation of the State from religion. With the removal of State barriers and prestige, many of the Evangelical Churches have recognised their opportunity and are exhibiting great diligence. The State Churches have suffered pretty severely financially since separation, and have been thrown on their own resources. The system of voluntary contributions had to be instituted, but many of their people refused or neglected to pay and dropped off, leaving a big shrinkage in actual membership.

Except with the Roman Catholic priests, the universal testimony is that separation has been a great blessing, giving a stimulus and creating a

cause of awakening among sincerely earnest Christians. Pastors of the Established Churches who before separation were strongly opposed to the idea, now testify: "We feared it, but it has been a blessing in disguise. We have lost only those who were not worth having."

The general religious position in France is tragic in its significance, and should excite the keenest interest and sympathy and arrest the prayerful attention of Christian people in every part of the world. France has not only turned away from Romanism; she has turned away from religion. Of this there are painful and patent proofs.

Not many months before I visited France, Monsieur Vivian, the Minister for Labour, delivered a discourse in which he alluded to the closing of the convents and the law of separation, and used this startling sentence: "Now we have put out the lights of Heaven," meaning that France had ceased to take count of religion. The speech was not only applauded, but it was ordered, by a vote in Parliament, to be printed and placarded all over the country as a popular manifesto, and as convincing evidence of the triumph of materialism.

That, unhappily, is the tendency of the Socialistic party, which is against all forms of religion. One sad result is that in education all that is religious is silently swept away. The very name of God

must not be pronounced in school, and is not to be found in any school book.

"We have in our schools," said Pastor Blocher, the devoted colleague of Pastor Saillens, in Paris, "two girls who were brought up in a State orphanage. They were 21 and 22 years of age respectively, and had never heard of or read the Bible. If any reference to God or the Bible had occurred in their letters the director had struck it out. So their minds were a complete blank on the subject of religious training."

This state of things is the more regrettable and tragic from the fact that the Pope has lately ordered the first communion in the Roman Catholic Church to be taken at the age of seven. In England or Australia Protestants scarcely understood the significance of that change; but in France its meaning is plain. In conjunction with the State policy of banning religion in the schools, the Vatican decree will have this effect, that the ordinary children in the State schools, along with the Roman Catholic children, will have no religious education. When the first communion in the Roman Catholic churches was taken at the age of twelve, it was explained to me, the young communicants were required to learn the catechism, but that would be impossible with children of seven.

Wittingly or unwittingly, the Vatican is helping the materialistic party in thus allowing its children

to grow up without religious education. The French bishops, at least, have foreseen the evil consequences, and have protested. "What will become of our people?" is the burden of their plaintive appeal. And yet from his particular standpoint, the Pope appears to have acted logically in this matter. Theoretically Roman doctrine declares that children do not need to know anything when they take the Host—"the Grace of God will come into them."

The English Methodists have been greatly moved by the religious condition in France, and have resolved to make a supreme effort for the evangelisation of the country. Roman Catholicism has been a stumbling-block in the path of religious progress always and at all times, and when that stumbling-block shall have been removed, the spiritual harvest to be reaped from evangelistic sowing will be much greater. The stumbling-block is already out of the way, in the sense that now the Gospel can be preached more readily and with less hindrance.

Rome stands to lose all the time by the natural revulsion which has taken place in France against priestcraft and superstition, and which has led to the official separation of the State from religion.

Naturally, she is losing to the materialists. She is, moreover, losing to Evangelical Christianity, though the leakage in the latter direction is as yet

small compared with her losses to materialism and atheism.

“ Three-fourths of those you saw to-day and of our membership of two hundred,” said one French pastor to me at the close of a Sunday morning service, “ were formerly Roman Catholics. In France to-day Roman Catholics turn very easily when their eyes are opened to the Gospel message. There is no opprobrium attaching to a renunciation of the Roman religion, or to an acceptance of the Protestant faith. The priest has no power to stop the people from embracing the Protestant faith. There are no social hindrances. So that when they hear the Gospel they are free to accept it. There is very little persecution of our evangelists now, even in dark Brittany. Roman Catholicism has lost its prestige and lost its grip, and France, in a general sense, is a nation without religion. Since the law of separation, however, the Roman Catholics have become much more aggressive. Everywhere they are organising special missions and so on to try and regain what they have lost ; but they know only too well that they have lost their hold on the people.”

I was not able for lack of time to make any inquiries in Government circles or obtain any authentic figures on the subject, but persons who claimed to speak with authority assured me that one sad result of the materialistic revival in France



had been a marked increase in criminality. The rise in criminality, especially among the youthful, and the increase in suicides is alarming. So much so, that there is a strong tendency towards a reaction, judged by the attitude of the leading newspapers.

Evidently the people are reading the signs of the times, and that fact is not without hope. Indeed, the optimism of evangelical leaders, despite the dark clouds which at present brood over La Belle France, is as inspiring as it is astonishing.

"I am hopeful for the future," said Pastor Blocher. "We have very bright days before us. Of that I am convinced. We already have the signs. It is because of the manifest reaction that Pastor Saillens has given himself up to wider work and is holding missions throughout the country with much success."

Rome cannot stand the light, any light, in any sense, and especially the Gospel light. Turn off the light and leave her in the dark, if only for a few moments, and she will be up to mischief. Rome in Europe is being eaten up by her own children. The countries where she is most happy are Protestant countries, certainly not Roman Catholic countries. That should be sufficient proof of how dangerous she is.

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**Packer, J                      A.**

Among the heretics of Europe by J. A. Packer. With an introduction by the Rev. John Clifford ... Eight full page illustrations. London, New York [etc.] Cassell & company, ltd., 1912.

xi, 187, (1) p. front., 7 pl. 191<sup>cm</sup>.

"Account of the visit he made to the Baptists of the continent of Europe, and especially of Russia, in ... 1911."—Pref.

1. Baptists--Europe. 2. Baptists--Russia. I. Title.

CCSC/ef

Title from Univ. of Calif.

Printed by L. C.

A4830

